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POST
WORLD OF SPORT
Cowboys win Super Bowl
It's ALL in the WORLD OF SPORT TODAY

Likud nears 'practical' approach toward PA

LIAT COLLINS

NEARLY all the members of the Likud's political forum met yesterday afternoon and expressed their support for a "practical" approach toward the Palestinian Authority, and the need to negotiate with it if the Likud wins the next elections.

MK Ze'ev Begin maintained his opposition to adopting a softer policy on the PA.

The forum will meet again tomorrow to continue its discussions.

It failed to fully accept a new policy during yesterday's three-hour meeting, and afterward the MKs maintained an unusual silence, refusing to talk to the press.

The discussion focused on whether to announce in advance recognition of the PA if the clauses in the Palestinian Covenant calling for Israel's destruction are rescinded. Most seem to favor a practical and public change in approach.

Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu refused to openly express his opinion, but is known to favor a more flexible policy.

Asked to respond to the charge by Environment Minister Yossi Sarid that the Likud is trying to decide whether to face up to reality, Netanyahu said: "I think Sarid is the one who should recognize the reality of what the PLO is and what it does. Sarid is the one who hasn't woken up to it yet."

"When we return to power, we'll have to handle the negotiations from the point they've reached at the time. The Likud will have to act according to the (Continued on Page 2)

Chirac announces end of nuke tests

PARIS (Reuters) - President Jacques Chirac announced an end to France's bitterly-disputed nuclear weapons tests in the South Pacific yesterday after six underground blasts in the last five months.

In a short televised statement, Chirac said France would take initiatives on disarmament and European defense in the coming weeks.

"I announce to you today the final end of French nuclear tests," the president said. Full story, Page 5

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Onman workers clash with police outside the Clal building in Tel Aviv yesterday. Story, Page 2. (Alon Ron/Israel Sun)

Barak: US bridging proposals not good idea

STEVE RODAN

FOREIGN Minister Ehud Barak said yesterday that he opposes allowing the US to raise proposals to narrow the gap with Syria in an effort to reach a peace accord this year.

"I don't think American bridging proposals are the most effective way to reach an agreement," he told the Foreign Press Association. "I think the best way is for both sides to reach it by themselves."

Barak's position differs from that of Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who supported US proposals to advance the negotiations during his trip to Washington in December.

Talks between Israel and Syria continued last night in Maryland following the weekend break.

Israeli sources said last week that they expect Washington to formally submit its plan to resolve the remaining disputes, should Secretary of State Warren Christopher fail to significantly narrow the gaps during his Middle-East shuttle next week.

Barak, however, said he does not see any need for such an American effort. He said that during his US visit last week, President Bill Clinton said the substance of the Israel-Syrian talks was more important than meeting any deadlines, either for the Israeli or US elections.

"It is too early for any kind of bridging proposals," Barak said, "the nature of which should be to

bridge something not very wide. Otherwise, you might violate the principles of one side."

Israeli officials, including Minister Yossi Beilin, said that they don't expect an accord to be reached this year unless the Syrians change their positions on several key issues during Christopher's upcoming trip.

Barak said Israel and Syria have advanced somewhat in their negotiations, particularly in warming up the atmosphere. But he doubted whether an accord could be reached this year, citing significant disagreements on water rights and security arrangements.

"After the next visit by Secre-

tary Christopher, or a week or two later, we will be able to make a judgment if the ground is right for a fully detailed agreement," Barak said. "Any type of serious solution will take long negotiations with many ups and downs."

Barak said that he advocates Israeli control of all the water flowing into the Kinneret. He said security arrangements must ensure the Syrians cannot stage a surprise attack and decrease the possibility of a major Syrian military offensive.

Six secular settlements set up forum for non-ideological issues

HERB KEINON

SIX heads of large, predominantly secular settlements in Judea and Samaria met in Givat Ze'ev yesterday and set up a new forum that they say will deal more with practical, rather than ideological, settlement issues.

Although those at the meeting denied that the forum was a break-away group from the Council of Settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, its very establishment represents a criticism of what the forum's members openly say is the council's over emphasis on ideological matters.

The local council heads who attended yesterday's meeting were Shlomo Katan of Alfei Menashe, Zvi Mayafit from Oranit, Yisrael Harush from Beit Aryeh, Shaul Mizrahi from Givat Ze'ev, David Kopolovitch from Ma'aleh Eramim, and Ron Nahman from Ariel.

The establishment of the new forum follows a call last week by the Rabbinical Forum in Judea, Samaria and Gaza to the settlement council to hold new internal elections. This call came amid rising criticism in some settlements that the council is not ideological enough.

But according to Oranit's Mayafit, "For a long time now, the Council of settlements has not pro-

vided us with answers to municipal problems, such as transportation and housing. I want the council to deal more with making sure that the inter-ministerial committee on settlements meet, and less on Joseph's Tomb."

David Kopolovitch, head of the Ma'aleh Eramim Local Council, said this forum will constitute another interest group inside the council. "I think we have to be more practical," he said. "We have to help citizens on a daily basis."

Kopolovitch complained that at a recent meeting of settlement heads with OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Ilan Biran, "Seventy percent of the time was dealt with talking about Joseph's Tomb, *div rodof* and administrative detention. This is interesting, but for another meeting, I want to know how to solve the security problems in my settlement."

One of the settlement heads noticeably absent from the meeting was Benny Kashriel, mayor of Ma'aleh Adumim, the largest settlement in the area. Kashriel said that although he agrees that the settlement council should concentrate more on practical matters, "this is the worst possible time to create divisions inside the council."

This plays into the hands of Meretz and the government who want to weaken the settlements."

Yecheiel Leiter, a spokesman for the settlement council, said that dealing with ideological issues is necessary. "Who is going to deal with these issues if we don't?" he asked. "Who is going to deal with administrative detainees, if not us?"

One of the forum's decisions yesterday was to set up a meeting with Prime Minister Shimon Peres. The settlement council turned down a meeting with Peres two weeks ago. According to Leiter, "We say that there is nothing to talk about with Peres, while he is pointing an accusatory finger at us and continues to sell us down the river. It is irrelevant to talk about stop fights, when the Palestinians are pointing Kalashnikov rifles at us."

In a related matter, Moshe Leibowitz, head of the Betar Local Council, said the government interministerial committee that has to approve new housing in the settlements is scheduled to meet next week to discuss construction of 2,000 units in the hard settlements of Betar and Kiryat Sefer. Leibowitz said the meeting had been scheduled for this week, but was put off.

Border Police trying women in tactical units

BILL HUTMAN

THE Border Police's tactical units - including the anti-terror unit - are to be opened to women, as part of a "first ever" plan to encourage women to serve in the force's elite units, the head of the Border Police, Cmdr. Yisrael Sadan, revealed yesterday.

"This has never been done before in either the army or police, and I would even call it a courageous move," Sadan told a Jerusalem press conference.

The first group of 40 women is to begin basic training for the units at the beginning of next month. By the end of the year, about 100 women are likely to be serving in such units, Sadan said.

A handful of women are already serving in police anti-riot units, as well as in the Border

Police undercover unit disguised as Arabs in operations in the territories.

Sadan cautioned that the plan is experimental and that the women, at least in the initial stage, will only serve within the Green Line.

"We will be watching their performance and motivation levels closely," Sadan said. The Border Police chief psychologist has been assigned to oversee a team of officers that will decide whether to make the plan permanent, he said.

Meanwhile, Sadan also revealed that only "several kilometers of fence are to be built along the seam area between Israel and

the autonomous Palestinian territories, not the dozens of kilometers originally talked about.

Prime Minister Shimon Peres had decided to lessen the use of fences in the "separation plan" first discussed early last year, and rely more on special technologies and patrols, Sadan said.

The Border Police is undergoing a major transformation, "from an occupation force, to a force that is leading the way in cooperation [with the Palestinian Police]" in such activities as joint patrols, Sadan said.

The Border Police has been beefed up by 1,000 new recruits this year. Its ranks are to rise from about 5,700 this year to 6,700 next year; in line with a budget increase.

Ethiopian donated blood to be frozen

BATSHEVA TSUR and LIAT COLLINS

HEALTH Minister Efraim Sneh last night ordered all blood donations from citizens of Ethiopian descent to be frozen and not discarded.

The decision followed the director of the Central Blood Bank's disclosure earlier in the day that he had not been instructed to stop discarding the blood, and the demand by the Knesset Absorption Committee that the government change its "policy of discrimination" against citizens of Ethiopian origin.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shimon Peres said he would widen the mandate of commission of inquiry into blood donations by Ethiopian immigrants to include all the problems related to the community's absorption. At a joint meeting of coalition factions in the Knesset, Peres said the incident was "painful" and had caused "indiscribable damage."

"It's not a political subject," Peres said. "It touches on the very roots of Jewish history." At the prolonged and emotional session of the Absorption Committee - which included representatives of the Ethiopian immigrant community and Soch and Absorption Minister Yair Tzabari - blood bank head Dr. Amnon Ben-David apologized for racist remarks attributed to him.

"I did not take the decision [to dispose of donated blood], but I accepted it, only to prevent pain

in the community. I apologize to you from the bottom of my heart," Ben-David said. Community representatives were persuaded not to leave the chamber in protest when he spoke.

Tzabari described the news of the discarded blood, which came in an article in *Ma'ariv*, as a "burn on our national flesh." The issue sparked a violent demonstration in Jerusalem on Sunday.

He said he fears the problem will not disappear for a very long time, because it goes beyond blood. It is compounded, he said, by the lack of recognition of the community by the rabbinate, the lack of synagogues, problems in schools and the IDF, and failure (Continued on Page 2)

Ministry to act against 'scared' MD

THE Health Ministry said last night it would take action against cardiac surgeon Prof. Danny Gur, following his remarks on Channel 1's *Popolitica* program regarding patients, including Ethiopian immigrants, who pose serious risks to doctors.

Gur said said if an Ethiopian could were brought to him, he would operate on him immediately. "But," he added, "if I were asked if I am prepared to operate on patients from groups *ybjch* pose a danger, I would try to get out of it because I am afraid." *tim*

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Major disaster averted in zone when car bomb explodes prematurely

A MAJOR disaster was averted in the security zone when a car bomb packed with an estimated 300 kg. of explosives detonated prematurely, security sources said yesterday.

There were no casualties among either IDF or South Lebanese Army troops in the incident which occurred Sunday night near Markabeh in the eastern sector of the zone.

A hole 10 meters in diameter and about five meters deep was gouged in the earth, and debris

was spread over a 400-meter radius.

The driver and operator of the car bomb were both believed to have been killed in the explosion, which security sources said bore all the marks of a Hizbullah operation.

It is believed that the car was stolen in Bani Hayan near Markabeh at gunpoint by two men over the weekend.

The vehicle was then prepared as a car bomb, either for use against IDF or SLA patrols in the

DAVID RUDGE

zone.

An SLA officer in the area said it appeared that the perpetrators had received help from somebody inside the zone. The officer said a number of people had been detained for questioning.

Col. Amal Assad, deputy commander of the IDF's Lebanese Liaison Unit, said SLA and IDF troops had reported explosions in the area Sunday evening, some of them from mortars and missiles.

"In the morning, during searches by the SLA, the remains of a car bomb were found," he said. "It appears that the car had intended to pass IDF and SLA roadblocks and continue south to IDF bases."

"We are still checking who was in the car, if at all, and who was driving it, but we're still in the early stages. Parts of the wrecked car have been sent for forensic tests and we hope soon to get more accurate details."

The security precautions on the

roads in the zone probably prevented the perpetrators from traveling on main routes and instead they took to side roads. It is thought that the driving over difficult terrain is what caused the explosives to detonate prematurely.

The last suicide car bomb attack, carried out by a member of Hizbullah, occurred last April.

The driver exploded the device alongside an IDF convoy but the troops, who had adhered to safety precautions, escaped unhurt.

Vilna'i: Crime stalks territories

LIAT COLLINS

CRIMINAL activity is the main problem in the territories, with terror threatening mainly the larger towns, Deputy Chief of Staff Maj.-Gen. Matan Vilna'i told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee yesterday.

In 1995, crime increased by some 60 percent over the previous year; property offenses rose by 33%; and thefts by 47%, he said.

There are also thousands of cases of people crossing the Green Line illegally, which Vilna'i said Israeli employers play a part in. He also noted that the theft of vehicles is carried out by mixed Arab-Jewish gangs.

"We have not mapped out a new Green Line or returned to the old one. We have located a number of critical points, which require a solution in the field of security and prevention, but our general perspective is of regional security and not for each settlement separately," Vilna'i said.

There are 84 kibbutzim, mo-shavim, and other settlements along the Green Line and they will not all be given a security fence and security lights, he said.

The committee meeting was devoted to the problems of the settlements along the "seam area" of the Green Line. Representatives of the settlements who attended the meeting complained that since the Oslo Accords, the security situation had worsened, particularly regarding criminal activities.

Vilna'i said a plan drawn up by a team he heads has been approved by Prime Minister Shimon Peres, but will be allocated a budget only after receiving the cabinet's endorsement. The estimated cost of the plan is NIS 190 million, including manpower, establishing bases, logistics, liaison,

stores, and intelligence.

Vilna'i said he is aware of the settlers' feeling of insecurity, and efforts are being made to improve the situation; but "criminal activities cannot be entirely halted."

Lt.-Cmdr. Avi Yelenik, deputy head of planning in the police, said police presence had been reinforced along the seam areas and four new stations have been or are being built: in Beka al-Gharbiya, Umm el-Fahm, Rosh Ha'ayin, and Modi'in.

The new plan will incorporate the Judea and Samaria police units and boost the border police presence. The seam area will be divided into 12 regions.

Committee chairman Haggai Merom criticized the policy as "unsatisfactory" and said isolated settlements had not been adequately provided for. He called on the government not to approve the plan.

Deputy Defense Minister Ori Orr rejected Merom's stand, saying: "One can't return to what was before 1967, because we're dealing with criminal activity not terror activity. It's very difficult, but the regional approach is the only correct one. It's redundant to put fences around each settlement."

MK Ran Cohen (Meretz) expressed concern that the criminal world and drug dealers would link up with the terrorists. Orr, however, said the Lebanese border is the most prone to drug smuggling, despite its sophisticated fence system.

Ariel Sharon (Likud) said the regional approach is correct, but the plan should be expedited, if necessary placing soldiers in tents rather than permanent bases.

Vilna'i rejected fencing, saying "one can't fence in 80,000 Jews."



Finance Minister Avraham Shohat shakes hands with his Indian counterpart Mahomah Singh in New Delhi yesterday after signing trade agreements. Story, Page 8.

Histadrut: Ouman is Polgat's guinea pig

MICHAL YUDELMAN

A GROUP of Ouman workers held a noisy demonstration yesterday outside the Klal building in Tel Aviv, demanding decent severance pay, and protesting Polgat's renegeing on the severance pay agreement it signed with the workers.

Histadrut executive member Binyamin Gonen said Polgat and Klal are using the Ouman workers as guinea pigs by lowering their severance pay in preparation for doing so when they close down the rest of Polgat's plants. He urged the workers to continue their battle.

Polgat closed the Ouman textile plant in Ofakim five weeks ago, and the 180 workers have since barricaded themselves inside the plant.

The demonstrators tried to shake the police barriers a few times, but in vain. At one point a group of policemen entered the demonstrators' area and took union head Yitzhak Gozlan in for questioning.

Prosecutor responds in Elba appeal

EVELYN GORDON

SEVEN Supreme Court justices yesterday finished hearing the appeal of Ido Elba, who was convicted of incitement to racism for a halachic article he wrote. They will give their decision only at a later date.

Elba, who was sentenced to two years in prison, was also convicted of illegal possession and manufacture of weapons, seeking information about a restricted area, and obstruction of justice.

Prosecutor Nava Ben-Or argued that the determining factor in whether someone was guilty of incitement was whether what they said or wrote was intended to incite. Intention, she added, can be learned from the context of the event. "Freedom of speech cannot protect someone who intends to cause damage," she said.

The main proof of Elba's intent to incite, Ben-Or said, was the article itself, which says that the

Torah prohibition on killing non-Jews does not apply today. The text is filled with racist statements that are not quotations from Jewish sources, such as "the life of a Jew is more important than the life of a non-Jew," Ben-Or said. It gives no historical context to the sources it cites and omits those that might lead to a different conclusion, she said.

Justice Zvi Tal, the court's sole religious judge, objected sharply to Ben-Or's analysis. "To take things out of context and say it's racist... that isn't what's written," he said, noting, for example, that after saying the Torah prohibition on killing non-Jews does not apply, Elba then discusses the rabbinic prohibitions.

When Ben-Or tried to show that the context of Elba's article proved intent to incite, however,

all the justices appeared to have some problems with her proofs. She cited the fact that the article was distributed in the Kiryat Aiba synagogue; the fact that it was written shortly after the Hebron massacre; the fact that the final two pages consisted of a summary of the article; the fact that Elba originally presented the article in a class, where he had the moral authority of a teacher; and the character of his students.

At Tal's prodding, however, Ben-Or admitted that the class consisted mostly of 50- and 60-year-olds, with a few people in their 30s.

Furthermore, the article was distributed in synagogue not by Elba, but by one of his students at the attendant's own initiative, though Elba did not object. Finally, Tal noted, many authors include summaries of their work at the end.

BLOOD

(Continued from Page 1)

to consult the committee about its needs.

"In Ethiopia, we suffered because we were Jews, but not because of our skin color," said Adisu Messala, head of the Unified Ethiopian Immigrants' Organization. "We never dreamt, after all the suffering along the way, that we would have problems of Jewishness here and problems with our color, too."

"You have forced us over the years to become aggressive," Messala added. "Do not be surprised if one day we produce an Ethiopian Uzi Meshulam."

Another Ethiopian leader, Yefer Alamo, said the Hebrew word for blood, *dam*, is like the Amharic for soul, *dem*. "You threw our souls into the trash cans," he said.

Maya, a young member of the community, read a poem she had

written to the committee members: "Neither day nor night do I have anywhere to be... I stretched out my hand and you turned it away... I gave of my blood and you poured it out."

Representatives of the Ethiopian community also met with Knesset Speaker Shevah Weiss yesterday morning and expressed sorrow that Sunday's demonstration had been violent.

Messala admitted the protest organizers had lost control partly because of the unexpectedly large turnout, estimated by police at some 10,000. "We didn't intend for it to be violent. But it seems the anger and frustration which had been building up over the years erupted."

"It's simply heartbreaking. It's a love story that's been wounded. But there is love towards the Ethiopian immigrants," Weiss said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Eitan: Peres wants early elections

Tsomet leader Rafael Eitan, who met with Prime Minister Shimon Peres yesterday, said he came away with the feeling: Peres intends to go to early elections. He later told the Tsomet Knesset faction that Peres has asked his opinion on early elections. *Itim*

Two Israel Prize winners named

Prof. Hans Shamrock and Yehuda Ratzabi have been selected as this year's Israel Prize winners in Hebrew language, literature and Jewish languages. Arts Minister Shulamit Aloni announced yesterday. Shamrock was cited for his studies on Yiddish, on which he is considered the world's leading researcher. Ratzabi was honored for his work on the Jews of Yemen. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

Animal Rights Day marked today

Freedom from suffering, freedom from pain, freedom from hunger, and freedom to live in a natural or fitting environment. These are some of the ideas behind Animal Rights Day, which is being marked by different events around the country today. The activities include television and radio programs, public petitions, information stands, and a special Knesset session on the subject. The day is being organized by Noah, the federation of animal protection societies in Israel. *Liav Collins*

Couple suspected of abusing twin infants

A Petah Tikva couple, both 26, were being questioned by police last night in connection with possible abuse of their 2½-month-old twins. The infants were in the Schneider Children's Medical Center, one with broken ribs and the other with facial bruises. According to police, it had not yet been decided to arrest them. *Itim*

LIKUD

(Continued from Page 1)

reality at the time, and not as it was when we left power. The question is not what was, but what will be," said Jerusalem Mayor MK Ebad Olmert.

"There is no doubt that in today's existing political reality we have to talk to the elected Pales-

tinian representatives, who are PLO representatives," Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo told Israel Radio.

Mnledet issued a statement saying that if the Likud turns into another Labor Party, it will not support Netanyahu as a candidate for prime minister.

Palestinian elections: Fraud, error, or sour grapes?

BACKGROUND
JON IMMANUEL

MUSTAFA Barghouti, senior candidate of the Palestinian People's Party - the only organized party running against Fatah in the legislative council elections 10 days ago - wants a revote in Ramallah.

Ramallah was headquarters of the Central Elections Commission, with a higher concentration of educated voters, opposition candidates, and election observers than the other 15 districts. If fraud occurred there, then worse likely occurred elsewhere, calling the whole election into question.

Barghouti says an exit poll, his party's poll, and unofficial results after two-thirds of the count, put

him in fourth place out of six places allotted to Moslem candidates. He finished seventh.

Worse, the senior West Bank Fatah candidate, Marwan Barghouti, who was behind him, was sixth.

Mustafa, from the same clan as Marwan, says irregularities occurred among the polling stations, the district offices, and the Central Election Commission. Among other violations of the election law, representatives of candidates were blocked from observing the process.

Some "irregularities" have been recognized. In North Gaza's Jabalya refugee camp, a new vote

has been ordered at two polling stations. But the pattern of the irregularities is not clear. Not all 50 or so candidates who narrowly lost were opponents of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. In North Gaza, Imad Falouji, who was lured from Hamas, and Suifan Abu Zayde, both Fatah, lost to independents after unofficially being declared winners.

In Jerusalem, official Fatah-FIDA candidate Zahira Kamal lost by 104 votes after looking a clear winner. Some said she lost because she was a woman. But in Gaza City, Rawya Shawa, an independent woman, won, then lost, then finally won over Said Mas'hal, a multi-millionaire businessman with pro-Arafat views who could have bought a seat if only it had been for sale.

In Nablus, Eymad Ya'ish and Amin Makhoul, two Arafat-approved Fatah candidates, were also on the local Fatah-approved list, thus doubly protected, but they narrowly lost.

Fatah rebels who claim Arafat unseated his Fatah opponents must explain why two such independents from Balata refugee camp won seats. The top vote-getter in Nablus, Fatah's flagship city, was Muawya Masri, an independent Islamist. He beat Maher

Masri, from the same family, who ran for Fatah's top spot.

Two Palestinian Authority ministers narrowly lost. Fatah chief Dr. Zakaria Agha in Khan Yunis, and Dr. Abdel-Hafez Al-Ashab in Hebron. However, the CEC found and canceled a ballot box in central Gaza stuffed with identical pro-Fatah ballots and many were suspicious that Arafat spokesman Marwan Kanafani came from behind to win.

But even without political fraud, the fact that at 8:30 on the morning of the election the CEC permitted people to vote with no registration cards, and then changed the rules again at 3 p.m., may have caused irregularities. "I think this led to double-voting," Barghouti says.

He is disturbed that, apart from Dr. Haidar Abdel-Shafi, who published a notice querying the honesty of the election in the *Al-Quds* daily yesterday, "none [of the 88 elected council mem-

bers] has taken a stand against the violation of the election law."

"This, he says, is a bad sign. "The question I am most often asked is, 'Will this council be effective?' Unfortunately, with very few exceptions this council does not reflect the future, but the past."

Dr. Nadir Said, who conducted an exit poll predicting a seat for Barghouti but said the result was too close to call, disagrees.

"In Fatah there are many progressives on social issues, even if they will toe the line on political issues," he says. Among independents he notes few won seats as clan candidates.

"The families have changed," because of the intifada. "Nowadays, there is class consciousness."

For Barghouti and the PPP, the former Palestinian Communist Party, whose 21 candidates failed to take one seat, that is cold comfort.

With great sorrow we announce the passing of

JOSHUA SAMUEL WEINTRAUB 71

The funeral took place on Monday, January 29, 1996.

Shiva will be held at 127/9 Pleshov Yatakov Netter, Ma'afot Dafna, Jerusalem.

Wife: Felice (Fedle)

Children: Chava and Aharon Cessel, Sara and Yisrael Mansour, Rachel and Mark Rosenbach

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deeply mourns the passing of

JOE VAVER

devoted friend of the University, and extends condolences to the family

Young Israel of Woodmere mourns the passing of

Rabbi SHYA LEBOR

our senior Morah D'atra, our teacher and friend.

Together with his wife Sarah, he gave 20 years of dedicated service to our synagogue, our community, to each of us and our children, teaching Torah, Chessed, and a zest for living.

Heartfelt condolences to his beloved wife Sarah, children Ricki K. Fiorisch Katz and Howard Katz, Avi and Annette Labor, Rabbi David and Adina Labor, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

May the family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Hershel Billet - Rabbi Jacob Weichholz - President

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مكتبة القدس

Amir subdued in realistic courtroom reenactment

TEL AVIV police Insp. Yitzhak Yamin, who leaped on and subdued confessed assassin Yigal Amir, delivered an all-too-graphic demonstration in Tel Aviv District Court yesterday, causing Judge Edmond Levy to admonish him for a "too realistic reenactment."

Amir had asked the court to allow him to reenact his arrest, to prove that he had only aimed the first bullet from his licensed 9mm Beretta pistol. Amir took the pistol and reenacted the shooting, while Yamin grabbed him by his neck from behind with one hand while twisting the hand holding

the weapon behind Amir's back to force him to drop the gun.

At his point Levy intervened. "You're going too far," he told Yamin, who added that a General Security Service agent had tried unsuccessfully to seize the pistol.

Amir told the court he had planned to drop the pistol after the first gunshot, so "nobody would shoot me."

Yoram Rubin, the GSS bodyguard of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin who was wounded by one of Amir's bullets, said that right after hearing the first shot he heard someone shouting "blanks,"

blanks."

In the past, police accused Amir of shouting "blanks," but he has accused the GSS of shouting it, apparently in order to "prove" some sort of conspiracy.

Rubin, who would not look Amir in the face, was testifying on behalf of the prosecution, after first testifying for about an hour behind closed doors on grounds of state security.

The bodyguard, who was wounded in the shoulder by the assassin, said that a split second after the first shot he jumped onto Rabin to protect him and he did not see Amir. He then said

he remembers lying on top of Rabin on the way to the hospital.

When asked how the second and third shots could have hit Rabin if he was on the ground on top of him, Rubin said he grabbed Rabin from the right and the shots came from the left.

Rubin related how he told Rabin to listen only to him and not to pay attention to what was going on around him.

"Don't listen to anyone, only me," I told him several times," said an emotional Rubin. "I was holding him and the next thing I

knew was lying on top of Rabin in the car."

Dr. Yoram Kluger, head of Ichilov Hospital's trauma ward (since named after Rabin), and who received the dying Rabin, testified that, "When he [Rabin] arrived, he was breathing his last breaths."

The first bullet shot by Amir was the one that killed him, Kluger said.

"He was standing up when he was hit by the first bullet. He fell forward and was hit by the second one," he told the court.

Amir told the court previously that he aimed only the first bullet

at Rabin's back. The second and third were fired at random, he had said, "just to make sure."

"Each one of the bullets could have been fatal," Kluger told the court. "But the first one caused the greatest damage."

Rabin's death was caused by the Amir's dum-dum bullets, said Kluger, while Rubin's wound was inflicted by a regular bullet.

Supt. Avi Sasson, who interrogated Amir after his arrest, said he had asked the assassin if he were "normal."

"I am completely sane," Sasson said Amir told him. "I did what many people would like to

have done and now feel fulfilled. I don't want people to think I'm crazy."

Again Judge Levy intervened, reminding Amir that insanity or temporary insanity are legitimate legal arguments.

"I noticed from the beginning that you are afraid of the stigma of insanity," said Levy. "But maybe you should listen to your attorney and your line of defense before insisting on your sanity."

Supt. Aryeh Silberman of the National Crimes Squad and policeman Ronen Antram also testified for the prosecution.

The trial continues Thursday.

Meshulam follower faces charges of sedition, incitement

UZLI Meshulam supporter Shimon Fadal, 44, of Bnei Brak, owner of the Rishon LeZion printing press which printed seditious fliers against Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal, Inspector-General Assaf Hefetz and prime minister Yitzhak Rabin was formally indicted yesterday in Rehovot Magistrate's Court on charges of sedition and incitement, and belonging to a terrorist organization.

Fadal was arrested last week by Central District detectives for allegedly printing and distributing anti-Shahal and government fliers as well as Meshulam's newsletter, which consistently prints anti-government material.

According to the charge sheet, some 3,000 fliers were distributed, via messengers. Some of the material distributed encouraged supporters to resort to violence against people and property, according to the charge sheet, and called for Shahal's death.

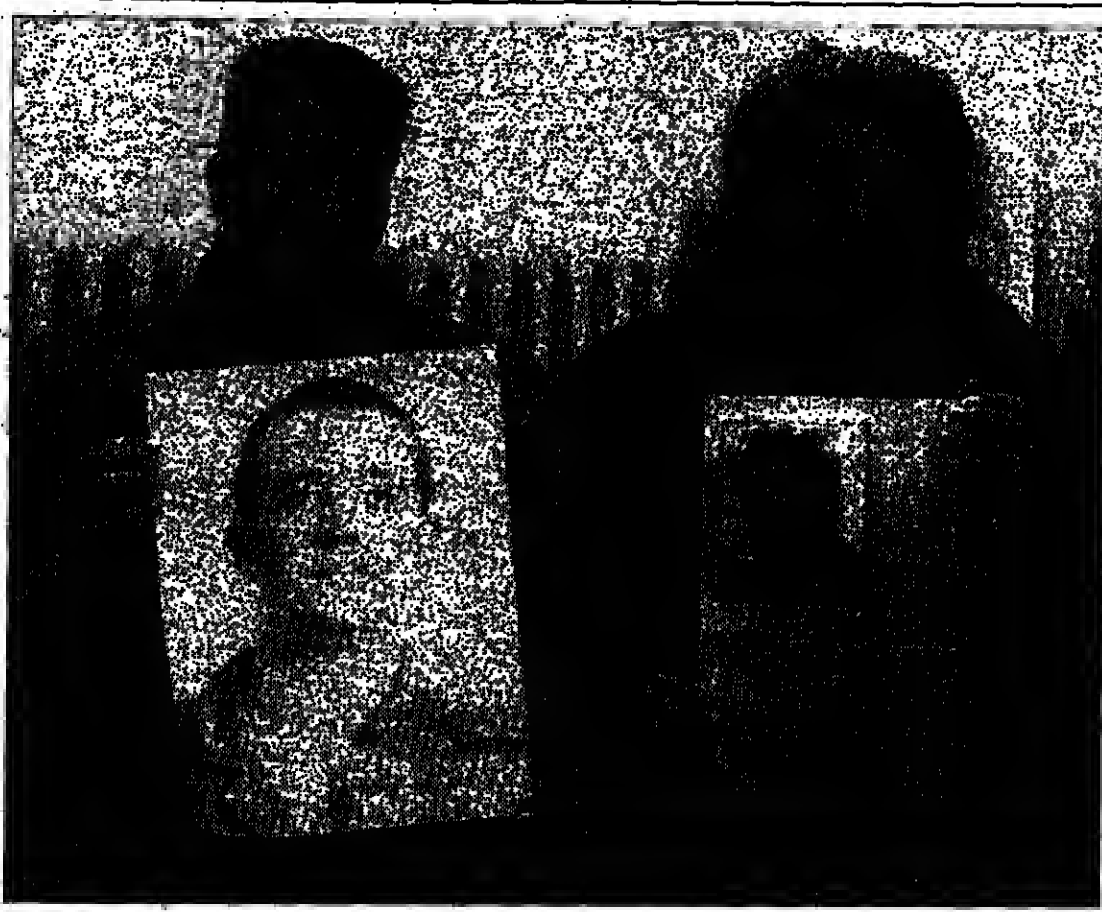
Meshulam himself reportedly issued instructions to his followers from his prison cell. On Sunday, the National Crimes Squad ordered the Prisons Service to disconnect the phone, until further notice, in the Leshem wing at Ramle's Ayalon prison where Meshulam and his followers are incarcerated. The orders followed information that the phone, which is continually tapped by police, is being used by Meshulam for illegal purposes.

Fadal's lawyer, Tsadok Hugi, yesterday unsuccessfully petitioned Fadal's remand in Tel Aviv District Court. Rehovot Magistrate's Court will decide this afternoon whether to remand him until the end of legal proceedings against him.

In rejecting the appeal, Judge Avraham Baiser described the incitement charges as serious.

Another of Meshulam's supporters, Noah Akbas, who is suspected of sedition and incitement charges, was remanded yesterday in Petah Tikva Magistrate's Court until Thursday. Akbas is suspected of organizing the children's camp near Haifa in which children of Meshulam's supporters hug an effigy of Shahal and chanted an anti-Shahal song.

"Shahal, Shahal, you high-class thug, your time is up," were some of the words of the jungle.



The mothers of Assaf Rosenberg (left) and Gil Tzurliel, killed in an IDF training accident in August 1992, continued their sit-in at the Justice Ministry in Jerusalem yesterday. They said they will remain until Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair tells them whether or not he intends to indict the soldier responsible for the accident. Rosenberg and Tzurliel, members of an air force rescue unit, died when a cable hanging from a helicopter's winch parted, dropping them 15 meters to the ground. An air force probe determined that a technician had failed to check the cable, but ruled he should not face court-martial. (Isaac Harari)

Former district attorney appointed to defend Amir

AVRAHAM Pachter, who worked in the Tel Aviv District Attorney's office for several years, was appointed to defend confessed assassin Yigal Amir by Tel Aviv District Court yesterday.

Pachter was appointed following the Sunday resignation of Mordechai Offri, who claimed that outside parties were interfering in the case and that he had not been paid.

By law, any defendant facing a sentence of 10 years or more is entitled to a court-appointed defense lawyer.

Pachter will now lead the defense, and Amir's other lawyer, Jonathan Ray Goldberg, with his lack of knowledge of Israeli law, will work under him.

Judge Edmond Levy apologized to Goldberg in court yesterday, after admonishing him several times on Sunday, and describing the way the case was being conducted as scandalous. "I did not mean to hurt you personally," Levy told Goldberg. "I just wanted the best defense, required by law, for your client."

Pachter said that although he was not "overly enthusiastic," he did not hesitate to take on the case when asked to do so. "It is important for our judicial system," he said.

He has already met with Amir, who asked him to pass on a message to the public that he acted out of ideological reasons.

"I am not a danger to the public," Pachter quoted Amir as saying. "At most I was a danger to the government."

Since he has entered the trial at a late stage, Pachter said he has been promised that he will be allowed to summon any defense witness he wishes, even if they had not been previously listed as witnesses. He also said he promised Amir that he could participate in cross-examining witnesses should he wish to, as he has done until now.

Pachter reportedly will not ask for a psychiatrist's evaluation, and therefore will not use a "temporary insanity" defense. "Amir is an intelligent human being and is fully aware of what is going on around him," he said.

Court rejects petition on PA in capital

THE government is taking action against Palestinian Authority institutions in Jerusalem, so there is no need for the High Court to get involved, it ruled yesterday on a petition by B'tzedek against the government's alleged failure to enforce the Gaza-Jericho Implementation Law.

The law enables the government to close down PA institutions in the capital, since the Oslo Accords state that all official PA institutions must be in the autonomous areas. In particular, the petition cited seven PA institutions which are operating freely in Jerusalem.

The government replied that it is keeping an eye on the situation,

and taking action when necessary.

A committee headed by Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal, which includes Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, has been set up to recommend appropriate measures, the government said, and its recommendations are brought before the Ministerial Committee on Jerusalem and the prime minister.

In practice, the government continued, it has taken steps to close three institutions; it is negotiating regarding two others, which are particularly sensitive because they are Moslem religious institutions; and it is leaving the others alone only because it has been unable to procure enough evidence against them.

It has also persuaded the PA to move its Information Ministry from Orient House to Ramallah, and it informs all high-level visitors that it would rather they not go to Orient House.

Justices Aharon Barak, Mishael Cheshin, and Tova Strasberg-Cohen said that given the "political and diplomatic sensitivity" of the issue, these steps are enough to show that the government is trying to enforce the law in good faith, whether or not they satisfy right-wing groups. They therefore rejected the petition.

apora in other spheres" he said.

Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg made a strong case for reaching out to nonaffiliated Jews, whether or not they meet the halachic definition of a Jew. "No one has the right to disqualify anyone from being part of the Jewish people," he said, adding that relations with the Diaspora must be "without paternalism or guilt."

Worry about shrinking number of Jews

DESPITE the growth of Israel, world Jewry is becoming an "endangered species," according to a study by the World Jewish Congress.

Jews are "a people in a crisis of spirit and identity," losing their identity through intermarriage and cultural assimilation, the report said.

"Demographically the Jewish People has never recovered from the Holocaust," said Avi Bekker, editor of the report.

Israel is the only country in the world where the Jewish population is growing independent of immigration. In just four other countries - Canada, Germany, Panama and Hong Kong - the number of Jews is increasing because of immigration. Canada Jewish's community grew some 50 percent in the last three decades. Germany's population has doubled to 60,000 in the last 20 years.

Everywhere else, the Jewish population is shrinking.

MARILYN HENRY

The New York region, with 1.75 million Jews, has the largest Jewish population of any metropolitan area in the world, outside Israel. Miami has 535,000 Jews and Los Angeles 490,000.

The Jewish populations of the successor states to the Soviet Union appear to be higher than previously thought, the study said, with more than 550,000 Jews living in Russia and 400,000 in Ukraine.

Israel's Jewish population, which is expected to surpass that of the US within 10 years, is 4.6 million, with more than 40 percent of world Jewry's school-age children.

More than a half-million Israelis have emigrated since 1948, primarily to the US (375,000), Canada (40,000), France (40,000), the UK (30,000) and South Africa (10,000).

There are 13 million Jews in the world, according to the

study, which was released last week in Jerusalem at the WJC's General Assembly. The report gives a country-by-country profile of the world's Jewish population, from North America's 5.6 million to Libya's five Jews, drawing on academic and other demographic studies.

In contrast to the American experience, Jewish life in Eastern Europe has undergone a revival since the collapse of the Soviet empire, although the majority of Jews there still do not engage in any religious activities.

Most of the Diaspora's one million Orthodox Jews are in the US, the WJC study said.

In 1948, the US Jewish population was almost 10 times that of Israel; in 1990, the ratio was 3-2, the study said. Now, the US is about to be outnumbered, a phenomenon that prompted President Ezer Weizman to quip: "Watch out, America. We are competing with you."

Panel considers 'spiritual rescue' of Diaspora Jewry

THE rescue operations of the Jewish people are not yet over according to the Interministerial Committee for Israel-Diaspora Relations.

The committee, chaired by Minister Without Portfolio Yehuda Amital, convened for the first time yesterday to discuss what Israel can do for the Jewish people. Whereas rescue efforts since World War II have focused

largely on physical survival, those required today are in the realm of spiritual the committee agreed.

In his inaugural address, Amital observed that in the past there had been significant reasons for Diaspora Jewry to give Israel both financial and political support.

"But now we have to examine our relations with Jews of the Di-

aspore in other spheres" he said.

Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg made a strong case for reaching out to nonaffiliated Jews, whether or not they meet the halachic definition of a Jew. "No one has the right to disqualify anyone from being part of the Jewish people," he said, adding that relations with the Diaspora must be "without paternalism or guilt."

Juvenile diabetes soars among Jews here

THE rate of new cases of juvenile-onset diabetes has increased in the Jewish population by 50 percent from 1985 to 1993, compared to 1965-1984, but remained stable in the Arab population.

Researchers are not sure of the reasons for the increase, but it seems to have something to do with the decline in breast-feeding, which is known to have a protective effect against the development of insulin-dependent diabetes in children.

This was disclosed yesterday by

JUDY SIEGEL

Prof. Zvi Laron of the Sackler School of Medicine at Tel Aviv University, at the annual Solomon Berson Lectures. In juvenile-onset (type I) diabetes, the body's immune system attacks the islands of Langerhans in the pancreas, halting the production of insulin.

In recent years, there have been 6.6 new cases of type I diabetes for every 100,000 in the Jewish population. But surpris-

ingly, the rate has not increased among the country's Arabs, even though marriage among close relatives is common.

According to experts, juvenile-onset diabetes involves a slow process of the immune system attacking the insulin-producing tissue; this seems to begin very early - even soon after birth.

Children who breast-feed at least three months have a significantly lower incidence of type I diabetes, but the exact mechanism for this is not known.

Privatization proceeding: Albania's president seeks investors

THE process of privatization in Albania is moving forward, and we call on Israeli investors to invest in our companies and develop cooperation with the full cooperation of the government," Albanian President Sali Berisha said yesterday.

Berisha, the first high-ranking Albanian official to visit Israel, was speaking during a meeting

with Prime Minister Shimon Peres in Jerusalem.

Peres told him that Israel is encouraged by the good relations between the two countries and will help Albania by extending its experience and technical know-how in such fields as agriculture, science, and medicine.

BATSHEVA TSUR

They then signed two agreements. The first, on the subject of protecting investments, is intended to increase economic cooperation and to create favorable conditions for investors, with both countries enjoying "preferred nation" status.

The second will make study

programs here in labor relations, agriculture, and other fields available for Albanians.

A number of building contractors are already involved in housing development in Albania, the Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

Last night, President Ezer and Reuma Weizman hosted a state dinner for Berisha and his wife.



ISRAEL BONDS



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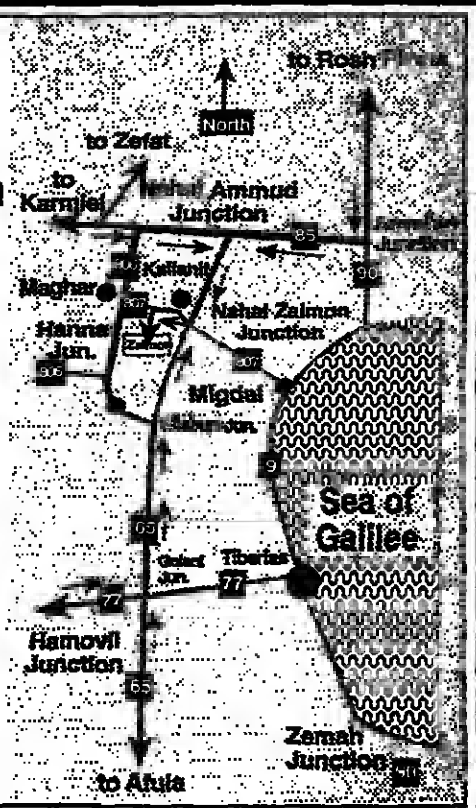
The Prisons Services The Ministry of Public Security

The Dedication Ceremony of the New Prison "Zalmon"

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will take place on
Tuesday, January 30, 1996
(9 Shevat 5756) at 3 p.m.

with the participation of:
President of the Supreme Court - Prof. Aaron Barak
Minister for Public Security - Moshe Shahal
Prisons Commissioner - Aryeh Bibi



Red Cross insists on POW release

SARAJEVO (Reuters) - The Red Cross, keeping pressure on Bosnia's rival factions to meet their humanitarian commitments, said yesterday that some 112 prisoners of war are still in captivity.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Sarajevo chief Beat Schweizer told a news conference 63 were being held as suspected war criminals - as permitted by the Dayton peace accord.

But another 49 were still held in breach of the commitments made by Bosnia's Moslem-led government, Serbs and Croats.

The rival factions freed more than 500 prisoners over the weekend, well behind the January 19 deadline agreed at the peace negotiations in Dayton, Ohio.

In northwestern Bosnia NATO peacekeepers fought against bad weather in an attempt to reach three British soldiers presumed killed by a landmine.

A NATO description of the destruction of the Spartan armored vehicle, which blundered onto an apparently unmarked minefield while on routine patrol, left little hope that the men could have survived.

"The detonation of the mine underneath the tracked vehicle sparked a fire which in turn lit the ammunition stored inside on fire," a spokesman said.

"Explosives and ordnance experts and medical units could not approach the vehicle because of...exploding ordnance and the fire inside the Spartan."

If confirmed, the deaths will bring to eight the number of soldiers from the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR), killed since they began deploying in Bosnia in December.

A Swedish peacekeeper drowned and another two were injured when their armored vehicle careered into a river in northeastern Bosnia.



A Bosnian Serb POW, one of 76 freed soldiers, hugs his wife in the northern Bosnian town of Banja Luka yesterday. (Reuters)

Despite the end of the war, NATO personnel still face a residual threat from snipers, as illustrated by the shot which grazed the neck of a US lieutenant in Sarajevo on Sunday.

NATO officers in the Bosnian capital complained that a tight security regime theoretically in force since December was now being strictly enforced, isolating them from the Bosnians.

"We have to go out in pairs, one

of us has to be armed, we can't go to night-clubs or cafes and we have to have flak jackets, helmets and a shotgun if we are travelling in a vehicle," one officer grumbled.

"This is not a great way to inspire confidence in the local population or to keep morale up among your men," complained one French officer.

There was better news for the 13,400-strong US contingent in northern Bosnia, most of whom

had access to a television relay of American Football's Super Bowl.

"Just to be able to watch the Super Bowl and to have access to the television is great, it makes you feel at home, takes you away from what we are really doing here," said Wendy L. Rivers from Charleston, South Carolina.

In Belgrade, rump Yugoslavia made progress towards reintegrating itself into the world community, much of which had shunned it

for its role in setting off the bloody 3-1/2-year Bosnian war.

The Yugoslav government announced it would recognize the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, which diplomats said could pave the way for full diplomatic relations with the EU.

The EU feels that Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic should be rewarded for his role in hushing the Bosnian Serbs into accepting the Dayton agreement.

American rape suspects seek leniency

NAHA, Okinawa (AP) - Facing prosecutors' demands that they spend the next ten years in Japanese jail, three US servicemen pleaded for leniency yesterday and blamed one another for the rape of an Okinawan schoolgirl.

Prosecutors asked for the sentences during final arguments in the rape case, which has galvanized opposition to the American military presence on this small Japanese island.

Defense lawyers said such prison terms would be unusually harsh, and the three defendants pleaded for forgiveness. Prosecutors, however, read a statement from the girl's father asking for the harshest possible punishment.

"Please keep these criminals in prison until they die - please," the father wrote. "I wish I could kill them."

Marine Pfc. Rodrigo Harp of Griffin, Ga., and Pfc. Kendrick Ledet of Waycross, Ga., have admitted to helping abduct the 12-year-old and beating and hinding her with duct tape while Navy Seaman Marcus Gill of Woodville, Texas, drove them all to a remote roadside.

Gill testified that they all three raped her there, tearing the tape off her eyes and mouth after she lapsed into unconsciousness. But

Harp and Ledet say Gill hulled them into helping with the abduction, and say they only pretended to rape the girl, fearing Gill's anger if they didn't.

A verdict by the three-judge panel - there are no jury trials in Japan - is due March 7. In Japan, 99 percent of criminal cases that come to trial result in convictions, and sentencing could immediately follow a guilty verdict.

Ledet crossed himself before he gave his final statement.

"My Lord knows every move that I made... and He has forgiven me," said the 20-year-old Marine. "Now I ask the court to forgive me."

"I am not an evil person. I have made a mistake in life," Gill, 22, told the chief judge. "I hope God is as merciful with you on our final judgment day, Your Honor, as you will be with me."

The judges became visibly impatient during the rambling statements by Gill and Ledet, in which they sought to incriminate one another.

"This was not my idea, and if the the other accused was not there, this would never have happened," Ledet said, referring to Gill. Echoed Harp: "I'm not the type of person who would think up doing something like this."

German Jews tire of 'the question'

ERIK KIRSCHBAUM
BERLIN

"WHY are you living in Germany?" "The question," for which probably every one of the 40,000 Jews living in Germany has a ready-to-recite answer, has been out in the open again since President Ezer Weizman said during his recent state visit to Germany that he was bothered that any Jews were still living here.

Weizman's comments struck a raw nerve in Germany's vestigial Jewish community.

It's an eclectic group made up of those who lived in Germany for centuries and somehow survived the Holocaust, those from the United States, Israel, South Africa and other places attracted to the country for family and economic reasons or even curiosity.

There is a newer wave of those from the former Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries who chose Germany over Israel because of its big cities, powerful economy and wide-open business opportunities.

While all offer a multitude of answers to that discomforting question, many Jews living in Germany will, after ticking off a list of factors, often come to this end-of-this-discussion justification: "Because to leave would mean that Hitler would have succeeded posthumously in making Germany Judenfrei."

Weizman seems to have exasperated many Jews in Germany fed up with "the question."

"What Weizman said was ignorant and dumb, the dumbest thing I've ever heard in my life," said Patrick Hellmann, 41, who grew up in the US but has lived in Berlin, his father's native city, for the last 16 years.

"I'm proud to live here, proud to be Jewish and feel very comfortable living here. I think most Jews living in Germany are proud to be Germans and were very insulted by what Weizman said. It was unfair to a country that has done so much for Israel."

"That is his problem and not mine," said the owner of one popular Jewish restaurant in east Berlin, when asked about Weizman's remarks. Before slamming down the phone in anger, he added: "If I didn't like living in Germany, I wouldn't be here."

Hermann Simon, director of the Jewish Center in east Berlin's rebuilt New Synagogue, added: "Everyone is free to live where they want to. Weizman is entitled to his own opinion about Germany. I have a different opinion. A lot of people accept but regret his viewpoint. I don't know anyone who agrees with him."

While Germany is certainly far from immune to racist violence - as witnessed by the wave of xenophobic attacks against foreigners that

plagued the country in the wake of its unification in 1990 - many Jews living in at least the country's larger cities said they feel safe living in Germany.

But the fears are never far away from anyone's mind and a low-level antisemitism among some Germans is not always concealed, Jews living here say.

Stefan Heym is famous German novelist who served in the US army during World War II before returning during the McCarthy era.

He recently bowed out of politics in Germany because he was fed up with the withering attacks on the reformed communist PDS Party of Democratic Socialism from the other German political parties.

The 62-year-old Heym said that antisemitism was partly to blame for the ceaseless attacks against the PDS, which is led by several prominent Berlin Jews.

"There are risks to a Jew seeking public office in Germany. I know the risk. It is life threatening."

Heavily armed police protecting Jewish leaders, Jewish schools, synagogues and Jewish community centers offer silent - and chilling - testimony that not entirely unjustified angst.

Two firebombings in the middle of the night at a synagogue in Luebeck in 1994 and in 1995, the first such attacks in the country's postwar history, shocked Germans and Jews alike and prompted a further increase in security measures.

"The security stuff is entirely overdue," said Irene Runge, 53, director of the Berlin cultural center, who was born in New York but returned with her parents to Berlin after World War II as the McCarthy era dawned in the United States.

Runge, who has written scores of critical articles for German newspapers, said the cultural center has none of the security and has never had any problems or threats. She said she has never had any reason to be afraid and six years of bashing Germans in print has resulted in a grand total of four nasty letters of complaint.

There are, in any event, thousands of Jews who are quite content to live in Germany and have no plans to leave and are indeed more than a little annoyed by even the suggestion they should.

"I don't need any justification to live here," said David Goldberg, a successful jeweler and property developer who was born in Berlin 47 years ago. "I am crazy about Berlin and I feel very comfortable here. It's an open-minded, lively city. I've got all my friends and family and ties here."

(Special to The Jerusalem Post)

New Niger leader: Coup was to save the country

NNAMEY, Niger (AP) - The army colonel who seized power in a bloody weekend coup said yesterday he did it to save the country from political stalemate but he gave no indication of any plans to return to civilian rule.

Two days after the sudden ouster of President Mahamane Ousmane's democratically-elected civilian government, soldiers guarded key intersections across the capital, often surrounded by cheering young men. If there was any objection to the takeover, it was only being voiced publicly by Western powers.

State-run radio resumed normal programming interspersed with messages of thanks for the coup purportedly received from members of the public.

The United States and France both condemned the coup and suspended aid. The United Nations secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, also denounced the takeover. In Ghana, President Jerry Rawlings - who himself came to power in a bloody coup - called for calm in Niger and expressed hopes that Ousmane would not

be harmed.

Ousmane was placed under house arrest Saturday when Col. Barre Maïnassara Ibrahim led soldiers in a takeover of the presidential palace and government buildings. At least two people - a soldier and a presidential guard - were killed and a dozen soldiers were wounded in gun battles.

An overnight curfew remained in effect but was relaxed from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. Political parties were banned and Maïnassara declared himself head of the ruling National Salvation Council.

Yesterday, Maïnassara met with representatives of several countries and foreign organizations and said the political problems that led to a deadlock in Parliament for the past year prompted him to act.

"Hopes died, aspirations were crushed, and hard work was sacrificed on the altar of personal ambition, intolerance and the patronage and chaos of gluttonous authorities," he told them in a statement that repeated most of what he had said in a nationwide address. "The working masses became hostages of

ill-prepared politicians incapable of adapting to the demands of a new democracy."

His audience included a visiting delegation of cabinet ministers from the West African states of Ivory Coast, Togo, Burkina Faso and Benin. They said after meeting Maïnassara that they were convinced of his concern for returning Niger to civilian rule.

But they said he had not given any date for a change in government.

Since November 1993, Nigeria, Gambia, and Sierra Leone also have had military coups, and none has returned to civilian rule.

Niger, one of the world's poorest countries, stands to become even poorer because of the coup. US law bans Washington from giving aid to a government put in power violently, and few European nations are likely to aid a junta that pushed out Niger's first democratically elected president. France suspended military and economic assistance.

Friends, admirers mourn poet Brodsky

MOSCOW (AP) - Russian friends and admirers yesterday mourned Russian Jewish poet Joseph Brodsky, who remained close to their hearts even though he never returned to his homeland that forced him into exile 24 years ago.

"He was the greatest poet of our time and his noble image will remain in the memory of people forever," poet Bella Akhmadulina told the IJAR-Tass news agency.

Brodsky, 55, died Sunday in his sleep at his New York home of an apparent heart attack.

Brodsky was persecuted by Soviet authorities and spent time in a labor camp in northern Russia in the mid 1960s before being exiled in 1972.

Actor and theater director Alexei Batalov, who knew Brodsky from the troubled 1960s, said he would remember Brodsky as a young man with sparkling eyes.

"I hope that he will remain in Russian literature forever as a master of great poetry," Batalov was quoted as saying.

Poet Yevgeny Rein called Brodsky one of the greatest poets in history and said: "Russian people can repeat now, as in 1837 after the death of Alexander Pushkin, that 'the sun of Russian



Joseph Brodsky (Reuters)

poetry has set."

Brodsky's works were banned in the Soviet Union until 1987, the year he became one of the youngest writers to win the Nobel Prize.

Asked why he'd never gone back to Russia, Brodsky told a television interviewer in 1993 that the time for returning had somehow passed him by.

A long-time friend, novelist and publisher Igor Yefimov, said yesterday that Brodsky's feelings toward Russia changed when the Communist regime collapsed in 1991.

"For the first time I don't feel shame for my country," Yefimov quoted Brodsky as saying.

Brodsky recently had been assisting Yefimov's publishing house Hermitage and reading the works of young, unknown Russian poets.

East is East, West is West, and then again, there's the MIDEAST.....history, biography, politics...



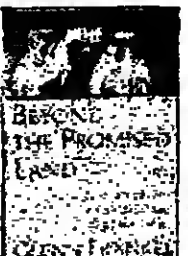
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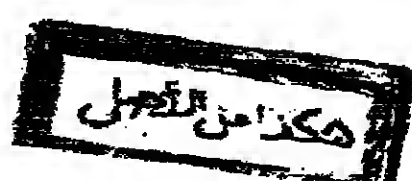


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Chirac: No more nuke tests

PARIS (Reuter) - President Jacques Chirac announced an end to France's bitterly-disputed nuclear weapons tests in the South Pacific yesterday after six underground blasts in the last five months.

In a short televised statement, Chirac said France would take initiatives on disarmament and European defense in the coming weeks.

"I announce to you today the final end of French nuclear tests," the president said.

"A new chapter is opening. France will play an active and determined role for disarmament in the world and for a better European defense," he said. "I will take initiatives in this direction in the coming weeks."

Chirac decided to end the controversial final series of French tests, which sparked worldwide protests, four months before the deadline he set last June and after six rather than the eight tests he originally announced.

He said the tests, which he acknowledged had angered many at home and abroad, ensured that Paris would retain a "reliable and modern" deterrent in the future, guaranteeing its children's future.

Chirac's decision followed the latest giant sixth blast in the South Pacific.

He earlier had a lengthy meeting with Defense Minister Charles Millon, who joked with reporters afterwards that they had talked about "nothing but that."

Millon raised immediate expectations that the president would call a halt to the test campaign, which has sparked worldwide

protests especially in the Pacific region, by saying all six tests had been "particularly successful scientifically."

An official close to Chirac said that if the data from the sixth test was as good as from the first five tests, France would be able to stop at six.

Asked about the results of Saturday's sixth and biggest underground test in French Polynesia, Millon said: "If it had been a failure, that would have been known."

Millon said he trusted French scientists would be ready to begin simulating nuclear blasts in a laboratory within months.

The conservative pro-government daily *Le Figaro* forecast a decision yesterday, but military experts had said complete data on the latest test might not be available for a couple of days.

A decision to end testing four months ahead of the May deadline he originally set, and with six instead of the eight tests initially planned, enables Chirac to go to Washington tomorrow as a fervent advocate of nuclear disarmament.

The Gaullist president is to meet the head of French Polynesia's territorial government, Gaston Flosse, today and is likely to announce an aid package to help the South Pacific archipelago overcome the loss of the lucrative nuclear testing center which is to be closed this year.

Chirac said in October France would probably stop at six blasts at the Mururoa and Fangataufa atolls and would then sign a treaty outlawing nuclear explosions forever.



A survivor of yesterday morning's shooting near Johannesburg sits on a sidewalk while policemen continue their probe. (AP)

S. African gunmen kill 8 jobseekers

SOUTH African gunmen killed eight people and wounded 23 yesterday in a vicious attack on a queue of job-seekers outside a Johannesburg factory that may have been politically-motivated and aimed at undermining peace efforts in volatile KwaZulu-Natal province, at the other end of the country.

Police Superintendent Wikus Weber said several men, armed with assault rifles and handguns, opened fire on a queue outside the N F Die-Casting factory at Alrode, a few km from the city centre just before 3 a.m.

"It was savage... we expect the death toll to rise," Weber told Reuters. He said some of the wounded were very badly hurt.

Weber said the gunmen walked up to the queue and opened fire without warning. Some of the victims, bleeding from bullet wounds, staggered up to a kilometre from the scene of the attack before collapsing.

"Hours after the incident, pools of blood, discarded shoes and spent bullet casings were all the evidence left of the slaughter."

The attack was similar to those which characterized political violence, orchestrated by a shadowy

DAVID TUCKER
JOHANNESBURG

... shadowy third force, during the countdown to the April 1994 elections.

Survivor Buthelezi Mntshelwa, wounded in the chest, said at a Johannesburg hospital he had no idea why he had been shot.

"I was looking for a job, but I am not going to go back to that place again," he said from his hospital bed.

Police Commissioner George Fivaz, visiting the scene of the massacre, would not comment on the motive.

The company, which is owned by the giant Anglo American Corporation, said about 200 people had gathered outside the factory looking for jobs when the gunmen struck.

Enoch Godongwana, General-Secretary of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA), said the union did not believe the attack was political.

"There is speculation among shop stewards that it might have been because of a three-shift system the factory is introducing, which is opposed by a minority group," he told Reuters.

"The attack was directed at people queuing for jobs. We do not think it was political," he said. Other officials said the new shift system would

mean less overtime for existing workers.

The ANC described the attack, which it suggested could be the work of a shadowy "third force" as an affront to efforts to create peace in South Africa, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal.

Mandela and his main black political rival, Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, are working with Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini to hold an imbizo (gathering) of Zulus to try to end blood-letting in the province where 14,000 people have been killed in political unrest in the past decade.

Several hours before the ANC issued its statement, a party official said the motive for the attack was "said to be people vying for jobs eliminating each other."

Police said the motive had still not been established and they were unable to comment on whether the attack had been directed at any particular ethnic group. Tens of thousands of migrant Zulu workers, many of them loyal to Inkatha, live in hostels around Johannesburg.

Nearly two years after all-race elections the country is still swamped with illegal firearms, many of them AK-47 assault rifles smuggled from Mozambique.

"We live in a society riddled with crime with guns all over. It's high time people stopped killing each other," said ANC spokeswoman Pumla Mtyeku. (Reuters)

Communists advance in presidential race

MOSCOW (AP) - As Russia's presidential race takes shape, two political parties yesterday threw their support behind the Communists, who already appear to be leading the pack and may now gain in strength.

The decisions of the Agrarian Party and the hard-line communist party led by Viktor Anpilov show a willingness for unity that so far has been lacking in the nationalist and democratic-reformist camps.

The last thin hope among democrats for a united candidacy was dashed over the weekend when the party of ambitious young reformer Grigory Yavlinsky nominated him to run for president.

Although President Boris Yeltsin has not announced his plans, he is widely expected to run. Yavlinsky and Yeltsin would be likely to split the democratic-reform vote, which could propel a Communist or nationalist into the presidency.

The Communist Party led all parties in December's parliamentary elections, seen as a dress rehearsal for the June presidential vote. Party leader Gennady Zyuganov has not formally entered the race but is expected to be his party's candidate.

Anpilov, who has sharply criti-

cized Zyuganov and earlier announced plans to run for president himself, called on his supporters at a party congress yesterday to back the Communist Party candidate, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported.

Anpilov said the important thing was "the unification of all left-wing forces that are opposed to the present regime." ITAR-Tass said.

The Agrarians have been allies of the Communists from the beginning. Agrarian leader Mikhail Lapshin yesterday reaffirmed his party's intention to support a common left-wing candidate for president, the Interfax news agency said.

A poll broadcast Sunday on the independent NTV network showed that more Russians would vote for Zyuganov for president than for any other politician. Asked to pick among 10 top politicians, 15 percent chose Zyuganov. Yavlinsky was second with 11 percent, while Yeltsin finished fifth with 6 percent.

However, nearly 40 percent of the 1,600 people surveyed nationwide by the Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion on Jan. 20-25 were undecided. The poll had a margin of error of 3 percent.

Another Kevorkian assisted suicide suspected

(Reuters) - The body of a woman was found yesterday in an incident authorities believe was the latest assisted suicide involving US right-to-die activist Dr. Jack Kevorkian.

Officials at the Oakland County, Michigan, medical examiner's office said the body of an unidentified middle-aged woman was discovered in Kevorkian's battered 1968 Volkswagen van outside their office.

Sgt. James Sutton of the Oakland County Sheriff's office said authorities believe the incident is another assisted suicide involving Kevorkian, who has attended 26 deaths since he began a crusade for doctor-assisted suicide in 1990.

"It appears to be another Kevorkian situation," Sutton said. "It's being treated as a homicide, as all of the other cases were."

Michael Schwartz, an attorney representing Kevorkian, declined to comment on the incident. But Geoffrey Fieger, Kevorkian's lead attorney, has scheduled a news conference - as is the custom in Kevorkian suicide cases - for 11:45 a.m. EST in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

"It was Dr. Jack's vehicle, we have checked that out by license and by serial number," Oakland County Sheriff John Nichol said.

British, Irish ministers try to cool tempers

BELFAST (Reuters) - Irish Prime Minister John Bruton upbraided Britain for breaking ranks on a joint drive for peace in Northern Ireland yesterday but said ministerial talks on Thursday could salvage their joint peace efforts.

Bruton's comments followed a British proposal for an election in its Northern Ireland province which sparked an Anglo-Irish row.

British Prime Minister John Major announced the proposal after a US-led panel urged Britain to drop its demand that Northern Irish guerrillas destroy their weapons before their political representatives are allowed into all-party talks.

Irish leaders say they were outcoffed.

"If you're partners, you don't act unilaterally," Bruton told reporters in Trim town, west of Dublin.

Britain tried to cool tempers with an offer by chief Northern Ireland minister, Sir Patrick Mayhew, to meet the leader of the IRA's Sinn Fein political wing, Gerry Adams.

"I think there is a lot to be cleared up," Mayhew said ahead of a series of meetings in London and Belfast this week to resolve the latest peace process difficulties.

"I hope we will also be meeting Mr Adams soon," he told reporters in Larne, near Belfast.

Adams has branded the election plan a British ploy to block his party's progress to all-party peace talks, where they would press for an end to British rule.

In Washington, President Bill Clinton yesterday met George Mitchell, who led the international panel trying to aid the peace effort and told him he hoped talks among all parties would start soon.

Mitchell, the former Senate majority leader who has become Clinton's special adviser on the troubled British province, led a three-member international commission seeking a compromise that would revive the stalled peace process. "I don't believe it's intractable," Mitchell said of the situation.

Freed tourists arrive in San'a

SAN'A, Yemen (AP) - Seventeen French tourists freed yesterday by tribesmen who held them captive in Yemen's remote mountains arrived in San'a yesterday with gifts of antique guns and traditional daggers from their captors.

Some of the 12 women and five men told reporters in the Yemeni capital that they considered their four-day abduction "a nice adventure."

They said when they were terrified when the tribesmen seized them, but kindly treatment "made them feel safe."

The tourists were scheduled to fly back to France last night.

Interior Minister Hussein Arab told the official Yemeni news agency Saba that four of the kidnapers have been arrested and will stand trial. He gave no details.

Authorities had threatened to attack the captors from the Al Aslam tribe if they failed to free the French tourists by midnight Sunday.

An agreement was reached before the deadline to release them by 7 a.m. yesterday.

The authorities had also arrested a number of men from the hostage-takers' tribe, and warned that "three tribesmen will pay the price" for every hostage harmed, according to a tribal chief who helped mediate in the kidnapping.

Kidnapping foreigners is common in Yemen, where heavily armed tribesmen in remote regions are virtually a law unto themselves. Some kidnapping crises have lasted for weeks, but most end without bloodshed.

The latest kidnapping crisis began Thursday when Al Aslam tribesmen abducted 18 French tourists, on the last day of their visit to Yemen, in Ma'rib province, 200 km east of San'a.

The tribesmen and their captives then moved about 160 km to the southeast to the Ain region, where they held up in a village quickly surrounded by government forces.

Thames floating restaurant sinks

LONDON (Reuters) - Police divers and helicopters searched the Thames river in London early yesterday for possible casualties after a floating restaurant overturned and sank.

No one was reported to be on the boat when it overturned at about 11.30 p.m. on Sunday but the possibility could not be ruled out yet, police said.

The divers, searching in darkness and icy waters, said they had found clothing in early forays.

Police said the search operation would resume at first light when the divers would attempt to get inside the boat.

The floating restaurant, called the *Lady Gwynfred*, was closed when it overturned.

"It's too early to say what caused this accident. We have no reason to believe anyone was on board but until we search inside we cannot rule that out," said police spokesman Fred Minnie.

The vessel was normally moored at a place called Fisherman's Walk alongside the Thames in London's Docklands - an area of new office buildings that has sprung up since the 1980s.

The London Ambulance Service said there appeared to be no casualties.

Local authorities said the restaurant had been closed since December and was not due to reopen until the end of January.

Greece warns Turkey after flag incident on islet

ATHENS (AP) - Greece yesterday warned Turkey that it would not accept any questioning of its territorial sovereignty after Turkish journalists raised a Turkish flag on a barren Aegean Sea islet that both countries claim.

Greece placed some military units on the alert, protested to Turkey and briefed the envoys of the United States, Russia and its European Union partners on Sunday. The flag incident signalled a worsening in already tense relations between the two NATO members and regional rivals.

"We warn that the reaction by Greece to any such aggressive nationalism will be strong, immediate and effective. We have the means and will use them without flinching. We will accept absolutely no questioning of our sovereign rights. Let them not be fooled," Premier Costas Karamanlis said in a statement.

Government spokesman Dimitris Reppas interpreted the statement by explaining that the armed forces "can halt any operation by citizens of another country, any action or initiative meant to doubt our sovereign rights."

Turkish Foreign Minister Deniz Baykal in turn summoned the Greek ambassador in Ankara and gave him a protest note claiming that the islet belonged to Turkey.

"Using all means at our disposal, we will defend our rights against a fait accompli," Baykal said.

Imia islet is about 11 nautical miles from the port on the Greek island of Kalymnos and about 3.8 miles off the Turkish coast. It is made up of two rocks comprising a

total of 4 hectares.

On Saturday afternoon, journalists from the Turkish daily *Hurriyet* flew by helicopter to the uninhabited rock. They took down a Greek flag and raised a Turkish one. The next day members of the Greek navy again switched the flags. Naval vessels from both countries sped to the scene.

Turkey's protest note demanded "that Greece withdraw its forces on the islets immediately and remove all signs that try to prove Greek sovereignty."

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The Jerusalem negotiations

Swedish newspaper claims that Minister Yossi Beilin, in Stockholm to receive a peace prize, will discuss the future of Jerusalem with fellow prize winner Yasser Arafat.

For four months now, Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert has been insisting that representatives of Israel and the PLO have been meeting secretly in Europe, mostly in Austria and Holland, preparing an Oslo-like agreement on Jerusalem.

Prominent Palestinian activist Ziad Abu Zayyad said last week that he had participated in such meetings, which included negotiators "on the ministerial level." Faisal Hussein, who holds the Jerusalem portfolio in the Palestinian Authority's cabinet, confirmed over the weekend that Israel-Palestinian talks on Jerusalem are being held "to improve the chances of the coming negotiations."

Yet on Saturday night, Prime Minister Shimon Peres, speaking to the convention of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, reiterated the traditional government position. Jerusalem is the eternal capital of Israel, he said, and it will remain undivided under Israeli sovereignty.

The discrepancy between persistent reports on negotiations and Peres' assurances is distressing, but it is far less worrisome than recent developments on the ground.

Clearly, any relation between the government's slogans on Jerusalem and its actions is purely coincidental.

presence of local police - is so absurd as to render the comparison laughable.)

Nor is Jerusalem's Arab vote for a Palestinian governing body an isolated, aberrant development. As Ha'aretz correspondent Nadav Shragai has pointed out, since Labor assumed power, Israel's control of Jerusalem's eastern parts has been steadily eroding.

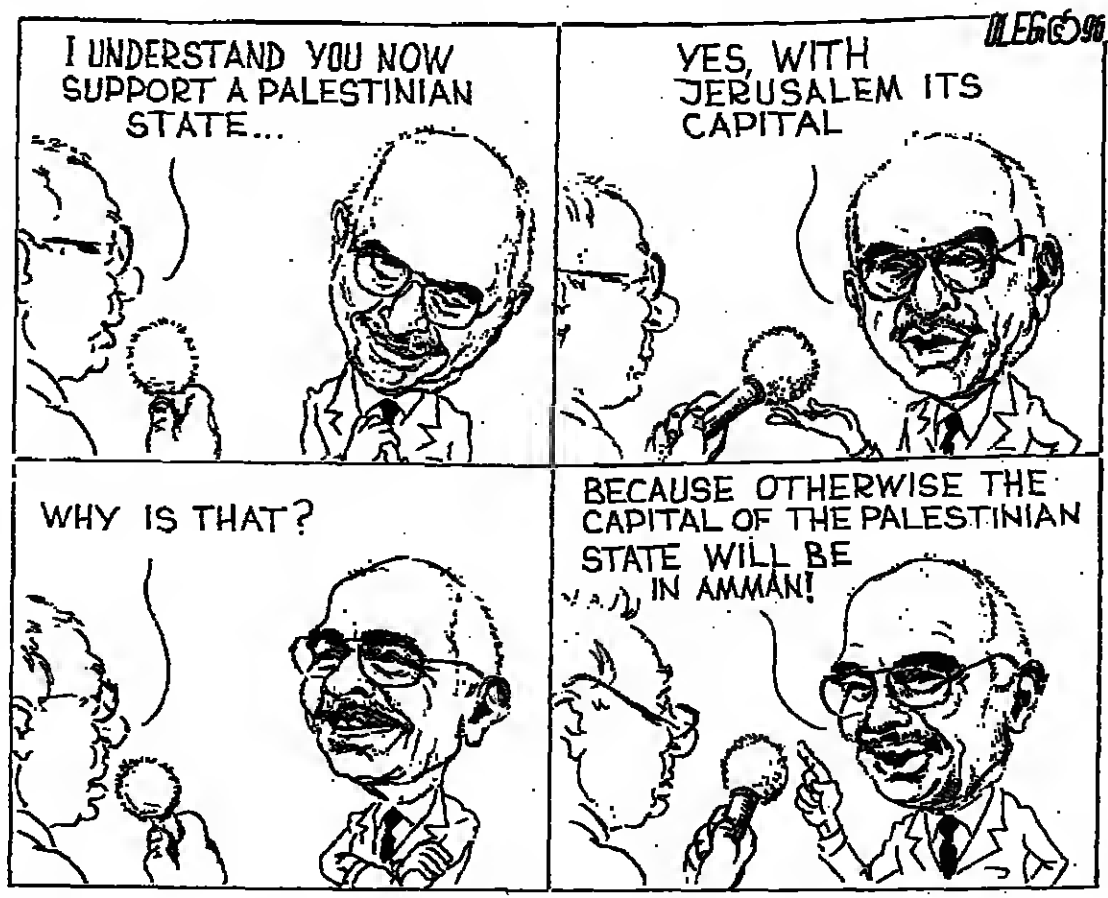
In day-to-day affairs, the Israel Police is in effect operative in the eastern sections. It has been replaced by hundreds of the PA's "preventive security" agents, under the command of Jibril Rajoub in Jericho, who run a full-fledged police operation in the eastern city.

Despite government promises to increase public construction, Israeli building in the eastern parts has come to a virtual standstill. The Har Homa project, probably the most touted housing plan in the city's history, is yet to materialize.

Yasser Arafat has appointed a municipal council, which he hopes to activate in the eastern city, in competition with the existing municipality. He has even appointed a Palestinian governor for Jerusalem.

Clearly, any relation between the government's slogans on Jerusalem and its actions is purely coincidental. Instead of the city and its environs remaining under Israeli sovereignty, Jerusalem is being surrounded by villages under PA jurisdiction.

Unless, that is, a drastic change in government policies gives credence to Peres' brave vows.



Message worth hearing

The political graffiti in my local synagogue have returned with a vengeance.

Following a short lull in the immediate aftermath of the Rabin assassination, the posters advertising demonstrations in the guise of prayer meetings in Hebron, Bethlehem and Jerusalem disappeared. But the cease-fire period is over.

Starting with the leaflets for the so-called "unity" rally of religious Zionists - "unity," that is, for all those who support the particular political policies of the National Religious Party - in Kikar Rabin, the posters have returned.

True, they appear mostly on the walls of the ramshackle but next to the synagogue rather than inside the building itself. But this is simply because the building is new, and there is an attempt to maintain an ambience of orderliness inside.

Sitting opposite the large windows facing these posters, it is impossible not to see them and be disturbed by their political messages in what should be an apolitical atmosphere of spirituality.

But there is an alternative voice: a voice of religious moderation.

During the past few weeks I have been fortunate to hear that voice religious moderation on no fewer than three occasions.

A lecture by Professor Aviezer Ravitsky was followed by a presentation by the new government minister, Rabbi Yehuda Amital. Then I heard an alternative view of the peace process by Yitzhak Frankental, director general of the religious peace movement, Netivot/Oz Veshalom.

Their message is not a new one. It has been touted during the past two decades, but with limited political impact.

It began with the alternative message offered by the Oz Veshalom movement, set up during the 1970s as a counterweight

to the territorial message of Gush Emunim. It was followed by the creation of Netivot Shalom, in the wake of the Lebanon War, and the eventual consolidation of these two movements into a single religious peace movement.

In the late 1980s, Meimad burst onto the scene for the first time.

Meimad has constantly argued that an appreciation of religious values cannot be achieved by passing laws, which, by definition, are imposed upon others.

Meimad's message of religious moderation will fall on deaf ears.

Even more recently, the Rabbinic for Human Rights organization, comprising a unique combination of Orthodox, Conservative and Reform rabbis, has attempted to promote interfaith dialogue between Jewish and Moslem clergy, together with a concern for universal standards of human rights for both Israelis and Palestinians.

The VOICE of religious moderation has two main messages. The first concerns the issue of territories and the Land of Israel.

Religious moderates argue that territory cannot be elevated to the level of a supreme value, with everything else taking second

place. While the biblical borders of a Greater Israel may have important historical value, they are meaningless when set against the values of human life and the avoidance of future wars.

The second message concerns the role of religion and religious legislation in the secular state.

Meimad has constantly argued that an appreciation of religious values cannot be achieved by passing laws, which, by definition, are imposed upon others.

Their message is one of promise and national healing. Their desire: that the religious youth of this country should hear an alternative message to the one preached by the spiritual leaders of the religious Zionist establishment in their schools and yeshivot.

Their dream? That religion, in its many forms, should be a force for healing, for bridging rather than widening gaps, for making peace rather than holy wars.

It is time for the voice of religious moderation to be heard.

The writer teaches in the Department of Geography and Environmental Development and is Director of the Humphrey Centre for Social Policy at Ben Gurion University of the Negev.

Thank heaven for religious moderates like Yehuda Amital

Transforming into a political party, it failed, however, to make the grade, falling short of the necessary minimum quota required for a single Knesset seat.

Reincarnated as an ideological forum some two years ago, Meimad will soon have to weigh up the pros and cons of running again as a political party.

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Life plan

JOHN PERRY

THERE is nothing intrinsically disabling about being left-handed, but when the world is organized for right-handers, it can be a real handicap.

I am not left-handed, but I have another less well-known handicap. I am a horizontal organizer in a world set up for vertical organizers.

The main mark of a vertical organizer is the ability to make use of filing cabinets. These people use filing cabinets to store materials they intend to use just an hour or a day or a week later.

When they need that stuff again, they reach into the filing cabinet, pull out the folder (which has been neatly labeled and put in a completely logical part of the file drawer) and resume working on their project.

Then there are people like me. Recently I was working on a letter to a medical clinic explaining why my bill is screwed up and I don't owe them as much money as they think I do.

It's pretty complicated stuff, and I didn't finish by the time I had to leave. A vertical organizer would have scooped the papers up and put them in a file to retrieve later. There would then be a bare spot on the desk, a dead giveaway we're dealing with a vertical organizer.

Of course, I left the letter on the desk, with the other documents around it. This is the mark of the horizontal organizer: I like all the things I am working on spread out in front of me, where they can beckon me to continue working on them. When I put something in a file, I never see it again.

The problem isn't that I can't find it (although that has happened), but that I don't look. I am constitutionally incapable of opening a filing cabinet and fishing out a half-finished project.

I do use filing cabinets. They are for storing finished things one plans never to look at again, and putting things that one would feel bad about throwing away, but has no intention of reading.

Suppose an old colleague

I dream of a Lazy Susan to handle all my paperwork

sends you a long, boring paper she has just finished. It would be mean to throw it away - and one would no doubt have to lie the next time one saw the person.

But if one puts the essay in a filing cabinet, one can say, "Yes, it's in my file of things to read this summer" - which is a truth, even if the chances of reading the paper this summer (or fall or winter or spring) are nil.

Looking as it does, my desk is likely to attract critical comments from vertical organizers. These people tend to think that a desk piled high with paper is the sign of a disorganized person.

Not so. If some thought were put into a good document storage and retrieval system for horizontally organized people, we could be as organized and neat as anyone else.

Here is my idea: Instead of a desk, I would like to have a very large Lazy Susan in my office. This is the rotating circular platform famously found on tables in Chinese restaurants. My whole life could then be spread on the circular surface. It could have little pie-shaped areas labeled with letters of the alphabet.

When I had gotten as far as I could with the letter to the medical clinic, I would have just turned the Lazy Susan until I came to the right spot and placed the materials there.)

With my projects thus laid out, each would have a claim on my attention that it could never have lurking in a file drawer. And yet all would be neatly organized, just as organized as if I were a vertical organizer.

Admittedly, a large Lazy Susan would take up a lot of space in my office, which is rather small. I kind of imagine myself like people I have seen in photos of model railroad clubs.

The whole room is taken up with the train board - little towns, papier-mache mountains and lots of track running everywhere. The operator ducks under all of this and pops up in the middle somewhere.

Since Lazy Susans are round and my office is square, my chair would presumably be in one of the spaces left in the corners. I could come in, crawl under the Lazy Susan into the corner, and pop up ready to work as efficiently and neatly as any vertically organized person.

I could also wear one of those denim engineer caps - although I suppose that isn't strictly necessary to make this system work.

(Washington Post)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CHURCH OFFENDED

Sir, - I strongly protest against the caricature Oleg made in The Jerusalem Post of January 15, showing the dying Christ and Mr. Arafat covering the word "Judeanorum" with the word "Palestinian."

This "vignette" and its publication in your newspaper show not only bad taste, but also a painful ignorance of classical Latin, surely not an asset for the cultural level of Oleg and your editorial staff. In any cultivated society, a certain limit for insult is given. I wonder how high the limit is in your newspaper!

Just formulating the above protest, I saw the next article dealing with Christian affairs in the Post of January 18 entitled "Shenker: Pope likely to visit next year." Not only I, but also other Christians were amazed at what was said about the Pope. I don't want to discuss the so-called scientific claims of the University of Florence, but the insinuation made to your readers that the Vatican sits on 60 kgs. of gold, contained in the Temple menora. Some people asked me: "Is there anybody who wants to harm Mr. Shenker by publishing such an article?"

These comments get further support in Michal Yudelman's article of January 19, "Blondes have fun" and the caption under the picture of Prina Rosenblum. "Just the sight of Prina Rosenblum would have cured the Pope." I hope Mrs. Rosenblum will not sue me if I state that if I myself also suffered from the flu I would not have been cured by her sight. We priests normally are not impressed by cosmetics and "glamour-girls" (as Michal Yudelman characterized the businesswoman Rosenblum).

Are you on a rampage against the Catholic Church, which finally established diplomatic relations with the State of Israel, or what is it all about? Some more respect for the Church might surely improve your image with your Christian readers worldwide.

MSG. DR. RICHARD MATHES (Notre Dame of Jerusalem Center) Jerusalem

The Jerusalem Post regrets any offense it may have inadvertently caused. - E.A. J.P.

LEBANON'S CHRISTIANS

Sir, - There appears to be one important element left out of the intensifying peace negotiations between Syria and Israel, the future of Lebanese Christians. If Israel, encouraged by the US, accepts a peace treaty with Damascus that does not specify the end of Syrian occupation of Lebanon, the light which many thought was the end of the tunnel may only be the entrance to a new tunnel which leads away from a just and comprehensive peace.

The formal recognition of Syrian strategic interests in Lebanon as part of a negotiated settlement will legitimize its eventual annexation of Lebanon as part of Greater Syria. Such a callous disregard for a sizable minority's democratic aspirations and its very security is not the proper price of peace. The unilateral withdrawal of Israel from the southern security zone of Lebanon will open the door to an escalation of Islamist activity leading to a further erosion of the Christian community of Lebanon and to continuing threats against Israel. The treaty that is sought to complete the peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors may actually lead to its undoing.

The US should seek a settlement which includes the security interests of Lebanon's Christians, especially those living in the south, and does not legitimize Syria's imperial ambitions.

THE VERY REV. KEITH RODERICK, Secretary General of the Coalition for the Defense of Human Rights under Islamization Macomb, Illinois.

CYNICAL STAND

Sir, - Haim Ramon has been kind enough to distill his views on religious equality in Israel ("Ramon: I won't register Reform convert as Jew," January 22) and they go something like this:

1. If you are a Reform or Conservative Jew in Israel, as far as he's concerned you belong to an "insignificant" community (American Jews sit up and take notice).

2. Small groups of Jews have no claims to religious equality. Groups of 300,000 or more, who would constitute a significant bloc of voters, might qualify for religious equality in his realpolitik world (morality clearly plays no part in this equation).

3. High Court of Justice rulings should be ignored or gone around when they concern religious equality for all Jews in Israel.

4. Granting religious equality to all Jews here is the moral equivalent of killing the next generation of soldiers.

Haim Ramon has been touted as an example of the "new leadership" in Israel. However, this sort of cynical, antidemocratic stand certainly does not indicate leadership that I will support. There is no excuse for an interior minister to callously dismiss any group of Jews in Israel.

NORMAN LOBERANT Kibbutz Rosh Hanikra.

MISGUIDED

Sir, - Why, in the face of the recent murders of two Israeli soldiers by Hamas, does Prime Minister Peres continue to release murderers and other terrorists from prison? Has Israeli society gone completely mad, or is the country so mesmerized by the Rabin assassination that no one - not even those moderate Labor MKs - is willing to stand up for what's right? And if it isn't perfectly clear that the PLO will rule over East Jerusalem in the future, I don't know how to make it any clearer.

Wake up, Israel. STUART LEDERER Yorktown Heights, N.Y.

A naval story with heart

Let me say right at the outset that I don't want to go back to the days when sailors were flogged. Neither am I suggesting that we reintroduce keelhauling, hanging from yards, clapping in irons, confining below decks on bread and water, or any of the other less than charming methods of enforcing discipline in what used to be a pretty tough navy to serve in.

Those were the bad old days, and I am glad they are gone. What the US has now is a compassionate, humane, understanding navy, a navy with a heart, a navy that is willing to forgive, to live and let live, a navy eager not to offend.

Just look at how nice the navy was to Mike Schwartz. It certainly was nicer than I would have been, but then I am not nearly as enlightened as the US Navy.

Schwartz is a lucky guy to serve in today's navy. In the olden days he might have been shot or rotting in prison, but we don't do this kind of thing anymore, do we?

Schwartz's full name is Lt. Commander Michael Schwartz, and I hasten to say that he isn't Jewish. (Saudi Arabians do not permit American Jewish officers to enter their country.) The reason I mention it is that none of this could have happened if he had been Jewish. He got into trouble in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where he was assigned to a US Military Training Mission.)

Also if Schwartz had been Jewish, there is the possibility that he might not have been treated as leniently - after all there is that other case involving the navy and a Jewish employee, where the justice system wasn't nearly as compassionate, humane and understanding.

Still, the government and even some prominent Jews say anti-

SI FRUMKIN

semitism wasn't involved, so when am I to say it was? But back to Michael Schwartz and that great friend of the US, Saudi Arabia.

That the Saudis are allies goes without saying. It also goes without saying that not all allies are equal. Some are much more equal than others.

For example, when Saddam was about to attack and eliminate Saudi Arabia, the US brought in a massive military presence and ensured that the country would continue its existence as a

humanitarian beacon of freedom in the Middle East. It was the least the US could do for an ally, right?

It didn't even complain when its troops weren't allowed to fly the Stars and Stripes outside their barracks, when female military personnel were told not to be seen in public, when troops were not allowed to celebrate Christmas openly, bold church services, or even to display Christmas trees so as not to offend their allies' sensitivities.

SOME allies are more equal than others, some spies much less

found guilty of four violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and other federal statutes for willfully delivering national defense information over a period of two years, from November 1992 to September 1994, when he was caught, to officers of foreign naval services. There was "intent or reason to believe it would be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia."

The documents included classified messages to foreign countries, a series of military intelligence digests, intelligence advisories, and tactical intelligence summaries. They were classified up to the secret level and specified "no foreign disclosure."

What happened next is heart-warming proof that the US Navy is a kinder, gentler navy. Schwartz is to lose his rank and his retirement benefits, and will be given a "less than honorable" discharge. He will not spend a day in jail.

So far there have been no expressions of outrage at Saudi Arabia's ingratitude and arrogance by the media, politicians or government spokesmen, unlike the flood of abuse and disgust let loose at Israel when Jonathan Pollard was caught doing for Israel what Schwartz did for the Saudis. The Schwartz case was largely ignored by unusually disinterested reporters, commentators and pundits.

Jonathan Pollard has just finished his 10th year in federal prison, most of it served in solitary. Schwartz is a free man.

Like I said at the beginning, some allies are more equal than others, and some spies - especially if they are Jewish and try to save Jewish lives by helping a Jewish state - are very much less equal than other spies.

I would hazard a guess that you have never heard of the case of Lt. Commander Schwartz, the 43-year-old from El Paso who is a 15-year Navy veteran. Schwartz is a spy.

He was accused, tried and

found guilty of four violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and other federal statutes for willfully delivering national defense information over a period of two years, from November 1992 to September 1994, when he was caught, to officers of foreign naval services. There was "intent or reason to believe it would be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia."

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He was accused, tried and

The writer lives in California.



'Georgia' is on her mind

JOHN ANDERSON
NEW YORK



Jennifer Jason Leigh plays a woman who wants nothing more than to be her sister.

Actresses exist most profoundly within the lives they borrow, but they generally know where to draw the line. Jennifer Jason Leigh knows just where to draw it.

In her new movie, *Georgia*, Leigh doesn't play Georgia. She plays her sister, Sadie, who wants to be Georgia. Shamelessly imposing, desperately needy and occasionally pathetic — prime Leigh territory — Sadie is a woman living a co-opted existence: the marginally talented relative of a really big singing star. Sadie desires nothing more than to be her own sibling. And she can't. And she is absurd. But for all the embarrassment and discomfort Sadie causes — to everyone — Leigh makes Sadie memorable, meaningful and occasionally frustrating. You want her to straighten out, separate her life from that of Georgia (Mare Winningham), get together with her musician friend Bobby (John Doe), get as far away as possible from the dives and the demented wackos and, most of all, be happy. The emotional connection Leigh makes with her audience will

pure acting to personal investment. "She's just burning herself into the ground," Leigh says of Sadie, looking small and pale herself. "I'm so tired. I was so jet-lagged. I just couldn't fall asleep at all last night. May I lounge like this?" she asks, a little laugh escaping as she stretches out. Leigh has never been considered a warm and wonderful interview. During press for *The Hudsoner Pray* in 1993, for instance, she was always cordial, but always a bit chilly. She comported herself like a pure professional, and not much more. But during the recent New York Film Festival, where *Georgia* screened, there was a new Leigh: friendly, warm; eager to answer questions; and quicker to laugh. She drags on a cigarette. "Sadie doesn't have a great voice; she doesn't write songs," she says of her character. "She even says, 'I don't write songs. I just make them up,' which is a line from Janis Joplin. It's not even her own line. And she wants to be thought of as this Janis Joplin character, too." But what she really wants to be is Georgia, who is one of the very few title characters around who is neither hero nor villain. Sadie isn't untalented — plenty of careers have been built on less — she just lacks a self. And where it leads her — into alcoholism, drugs, snipid affairs and two-bit gigs in bowling alleys — is the stuff of the film. As a social symptom, Sadie represents a broad constituency that includes everyone from Gerald's next guest to Mark David Chapman. In an age when you presumably don't exist if you're not on television, there are many people who are desperate for stardom but also desperate for talent. It's like needing water but not having a mouth. Sadie has a mouth, which is part of the problem. "It's so funny," Leigh says,

"because whenever I do anyone's song I would try to do it as close to that person as possible, because that's who Sadie is. She's dying to be Georgia, but when she sings other people's songs... When she does a Van Morrison song, it's Van Morrison, ya know? And yet, the more she tries to become these other people, the more she becomes herself. The thing I didn't even realize until I saw the film was that the more she tries to emulate others, the more Sadie she becomes." FOR LEIGH, who appeared earlier this year in Taylor Hackford's *Dolores Claiborne* and will soon be seen in Robert Altman's *Kansas City*, *Georgia* is a family affair. Her mother, screenwriter Barbara Turner (Leigh's father was the late Vic Morrow), was someone she had "always wanted to work with." So she made a proposal.

"I had this germ of an idea about two sisters," she says, "one with a voice from God and one with a voice, as John Doe says, from Detroit. It was about the relationship between the eternal screw-up and the one who's so grounded. I also always wanted to do a movie about sisters, because I have two sisters and I'm really close to both of them, and I find these relationships moving and fascinating and a big part of my life. So, anyway, I told her this vague idea, and she said she liked it and that she'd be interested in writing it." Leigh, who also coproduced the film with her mother and director Ulu Grosbard, spends a large amount of screen time singing and performing, usually in run-down honky-tonks. Her cinematography includes Doe, a former member of the Los Angeles band X, and John C. Reilly, who plays the doomed drummer Herman. The centerpiece of the film — and the moment of relative triumph for Sadie — comes during an

eight-and-a-half minute performance of Van Morrison's "Take Me Back," a rambling, passionate musical meditation that Sadie sings onstage in the middle of a Georgia concert. It was done in two takes, and is extraordinary to watch, a collision of desire and fate. From *Last Exit to Brooklyn* to *Rush to Mrs. Parker and the Vicious Circle* to *Dolores Claiborne* to *The Hudsoner Pray* — which featured her insanely man-nared homage/parody of the Kate Hepburn-Roz Russell-style screwball heroine — Leigh has consistently won praise, even if the people praising her didn't necessarily like the movies she was in. "I found that to be the case a lot during the first couple of years I was working," she says. "But back then, I felt lucky to find parts I found inspiring and wanted to play; I didn't even look at the whole movie — I mean, as a choice. I'd just say, 'This is a character I could do something with. It excites me and it's challenging to play.' Now I feel like I'm getting to make movies I would pay to go see. For me, that's a great thing, so I feel very lucky in that respect." (Newsday)

Tori Amos: A trial by fire

NEW RELEASES
TIRZAH AGASSI

Tori Amos's third major album, *Boys For Pele* (Hed Arzi), is dedicated to the Hawaiian volcano goddess (pronounced Peyley). Would-be pagan Amos is a Southern minister's daughter who sings: "Honey, We're Recovering Christians." This album is her fire-worshipping effort to exorcise her familiar demons of guilt and shame, plus the pain and rage triggered by the end of her eight-year relationship with Eric Rosse, co-producer of the double platinum *Under the Pink* (Hed Arzi). The man behind the woman couldn't handle being upstaged, hints Amos in her lyrics: "You told me last night you were a sun now with your very own devoted satellite," adding that "I think you never learned to take." The extremely talented Amos is hurt, scared and furious. Unfortunately she is also overly self-indulgent as she dives into this new chapter of her saga. Though remarkable insights and outrageous observations pepper the album's 18 tracks often sound like a self-involved, stream-of-consciousness journal. It gets tiresome. *Little Earthquakes* (Hed Arzi), her brilliant breakthrough of '91, was both more disciplined and more endearing. The classically trained Amos is one of the most adept and inventive woman composers and performers today. And her communicative vocals are deeper and

richer than before: she can handle a whole song playing only a grand piano, as on the lovely "Horses." She can also get down dirty, playing the piano and harpsichord along with a rhythm section that includes both electronic drum programming and the African drumming of Mann Kathe on "Professional Widow," a bitch-fest apparently aimed at Kurt Cobain's widow Courtney Love. But how much of her insistent company can one take? And how do you respond to a disc booklet that includes a picture of a dreamy-eyed Amos sucking a real, live piglet? There are indeed reviewers who admire the reckless courage of this album, and are more than glad to join the *Boys For Pele* Club. So perhaps the time is ripe for the kind of very sexual revolution which burned out earlier role models like Joni Mitchell. Then again, maybe one has to be as crass as Madonna to more or less get away with being this "in your face" shameless. Though some will find the 35-year-old Amos's honesty therapeutic, this reviewer feels impatient with her type of desperado-feminism. It's true that being a strong creative woman can be rough. But something seems off about an album in which the object of the singer's desire is viewed only as a pretty stud cum musc. We don't learn so much as the color of his eyes. The self-produced *Boys For*



Amos hasn't used up her talent, but she coming close to exhausting her audience's patience with her personal agenda.

Pele may not be an album that everyone can live with. Nonetheless it contains many gems that deserve notice. The delicate tone and precise lyrics of "Hey Jupiter" stand out: "no one's picking up the phone/ guess it's

clear he's gone/ and this little masochist's lifting up her dress." The song and its execution are beautiful. But there's the rub. Amos may be struggling to overcome her masochism. But along the way, she makes it mighty

attractive. She does make progress, though, in taking responsibility for driving the man away. At the end of her long-winded odyssey, Amos confesses that "I killed a man." This seems to be a melo-

dramatic way of admitting that she knows that she's rather a pain as she struggles to be the most original star in the firmament. Hopefully next time she'll focus on bringing through light, rather than fire.

The Elizabethans brought to life; Beethoven mellows out

CONCERT ROUNDUP

THIS recital by lutenist Anthony Rooley and soprano Evelyn Tubb of the Consort of Music was quite an occasion for connoisseurs of early music. The spotlight was on England during and after the Elizabethan Age. The evening was also another example of Rooley's untiring efforts to unearth music of this period, from both England and Italy. As in all of his previous appearances here and abroad, Rooley introduced hitherto obscure names and works. All of the works, masterfully interpreted by Tubb, were imbued with a highly differentiated emotional quality and vocal color. The songs covered the spectrum of emotions evoked by love, from despair and melancholy to blind adoration. The recital ended with the ultimate yearning of all heart-broken souls: "Find me a lonely cave," composed by the remarkable but rarely performed John Eccles. Tubb's singing ranged from a completely neutral and uninvolved rendition of "A shepherd in a shade" by John Dowland to a highly dramatic performance of "Amaryllis, tear thy hair" by

William Lawes. She delivered the messages not only through her voice, but also via body language, which probably reflected the way these pieces were enacted in their own time. Rooley's playing was always at the service of the singer. The new Enav Cultural Center, built on top of Tel Aviv's Gan Ha'ir shopping center, is beautiful and has excellent acoustics. Enav Cultural Center, Tel Aviv, January 22. Benjamin Bar-Am

THE familiar classical style of Beethoven and his contemporaries sounded unfamiliarly novel as played on the period instruments of the Biedermeyer Quintet — Marten Root (flute), Frank de Bruine (oboe), Eric Hoepfich (clarinet), Claude Maury (horn) and Marc Vallon (bassoon) — in the Authentica series. Instead of the newer instruments' brilliance that I am accustomed to, the sound is more mellow, rounded and soft; textures are more transparent and clear. All of the composers on the program — Danzi, Beethoven, Reicha and Berr in his

arrangement of a Rossini String Quartet — displayed an unerring sense for highlighting the characteristic qualities peculiar to each instrument. The works were light-hearted, amusing, abounding in ideas, elegant and refined in style. The playing was highly polished, striving for a balance of the heterogeneous instruments' sound, and enjoyably good-humored. Jerusalem Theater, January 27. Ury Eppstein

BEETHOVEN'S Leonore Overture No. 3, after its performance just one week earlier, was played for a second time in the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra's Subscription Concert No. 3, presumably for the benefit of those multitudes who clamored impatiently to hear it again. Svetlana's "Furiant" and the "Dance of the Comedians" from *The Bartered Bride*, a showpiece for a virtuosic orchestra wishing to display its light-fingered agility, demonstrated the gap between wishful thinking and reality.

Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes by Weber* invariably remained a hide-and-seek game for the 'e' who are intent on detecting Weber's themes beneath Hindemith's willful treatment. The orchestra, conducted by David Shallon, dragged its feet with that characteristic heaviness that Hindemith mostly strove to avoid in his works. Brahms's Symphony No. 1 plodded along directionlessly in the first movement, gathering momentum from the second one onward, building up formidable tension. The climax itself fell just short of fulfillment. All of these works will, hopefully, impress European audiences in the JSO's scheduled European tour. Jerusalem Theater, January 24. Ury Eppstein

It is a pity that there aren't more opera recitals within Israel Philharmonic Orchestra concerts. It is an even greater pity that when such a recital does occur, it is presented with other, less impressive, musical ingredients like a Mozart divertimento or a silly sound-and-light presentation of Scriabin's *Poem of Fire*. It would have been much more rewarding to hear Susanna Poretzky sing several more arias. While many mezzos would opt to sing arias from one category in an orchestral concert, each of Poretzky's four selections was from an entirely different genre. An aria from Rossini's comic *L'italiana in Algeri* showcased her coloratura singing. This was followed by a very lyric aria from Tchaikovsky's *The Maid of Orleans*. Leonora's aria from Donizetti's *La Favorita* displayed Poretzky's dramatic power, while the "Habenera" from Bizet's *Carmen* showed off her sex appeal. Mann Auditorium, Tel Aviv, January 21. Michael Aizenstadt

That said, one could enjoy cellist Emanuel Gruber's sincere and powerful rendition of Hindemith's cello concerto, in which the Musica Nova ensemble was conducted with precision by Noam Sheriff. Yoni Rechter's overly eclectic *Farewell to Chanson* is one of the composer's less impressive forays into the classical music genre. Yet it was performed in a most dedicated style by the ensemble, this time under Yuval Ben-Ozer, showcasing a fabulous percussion cadenza performed by the electrifying Chen Zimbalista. The evening's highlight was undoubtedly Peretz Elyahu's concerto, a highly evocative piece which managed to weld in a most magical way its ethnic and classical music elements. It was performed with devotion and love by Suleiman Tahub and the ensemble was conducted by Menahem Nebenhaus. Beit Recital, Tel Aviv, January 22. Michael Aizenstadt

MUSICA Nova definitely made a splash with its 10th anniversary concert, which was staged as a gala dinner in a Tel Aviv wedding hall. But despite the unusual ambience's benefits, there was some music which could have been better judged and enjoyed in a concert hall.

Former Bolshoi star also proves an inspiring teacher

With each new performance, Nina Timofeyeva brings the ballet workshop of the Academy High School in Jerusalem closer to professional standards. The program at the Rebecca Crown Theater was evidence confirming that the group is well on its way. Timofeyeva, former prima ballerina of the Bolshoi and now directing this workshop, proved that she is as great as a teacher as she was as a dancer. She is inspiring qualities rare among Israelis — lyricism, grace, and musicality of movement. She is obviously adding a sense of expressiveness in emotions to precision, energy and the ability to take risks. In other words, her students are now developing the gift of interpretation. In her wisdom, she has not yet

chosen highly emotional roles for her students; there were no swans or Giselles. The accent was on achievement. Thus, excerpts from *The Sleeping Beauty* were confined to the divertissement, mostly of the third act, and the emphasis was on joy and skill. The aim was obviously to show what the dancers could do — and they impressed. Even those who have memories of great Russian Blue Birds could enjoy this staging to the last leap. The Flower Festival at Genzano may not have had all the smoothness of Bourmonville technique, but it shone with the delight of youth. The pas de quatre, designed by Jules Perrot for four prima ballerinas, was beautifully adapted and the surprise was that Timofeyeva herself was one of the four — though the dim light made it impossible to distinguish her from the others.

In the Carmen duet, the stress was rightly on the gypsy's triumph over her lover Don Jose, but one missed a hint of the tragedy to come. The fairies were all as lovely as fairies can be, and the courtiers were admirable too. The costumes were splendid — worthy of any full-scale staging. There were only three male dancers, but they filled their roles admirably. MOSHE VARDI'S *Mene Uve* at Habama (Fringe Arts Center) in Talpait, Jerusalem — with himself two men, and one woman — didn't shock the audience as much as he may have wished. Nude frontal male displays have been common since *Oh Calcutta*. Even Habama has had such performances. There was little beyond that except faithful cowering in crazy costumes and walking in a sea of

what looked like feathers. The music, however, was quite beautiful; the solo voice lovely. Oh, yes. The show began with a man having his hair combed. Dora Sowden

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEKS ON CHARTS	ARTIST	TITLE
#1	1	VARIOUS ARTISTS	RABIN - GOODBYE FRIEND
#2	2	MADONNA	SOMETHING TO REMEMBER
#3	3	YEHUDA POLIKER	THE CHILD IN YOU
#4	5	FILM SOUND TRACK	DANGEROUS MINDS
#5	4	ELTON JOHN	LOVE SONGS
#6	23	RAMI KLEINSTEIN	APPLES AND DATES
#7	8	VANGELIS	VOICES
#8	3	FILM SOUND TRACK	FRISCILLA
#9	10	VARIOUS ARTISTS	BEST DISCO IN TOWN
#10	NEW	FILM SOUND TRACK	LISBON STORY
#11	12	VARIOUS ARTISTS	PLATINUS 2
#12	11	SADE	BEST OF
#13	RE	GIDI GOV	SONGS FROM 'GOV NIGHT'
#14	9	OASIS	MORNING GLORY
#15	7	ARKADI DUCHIN	ARKADI DUCHIN

Tower Records' top-selling albums for the previous week. RE - re-entry

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 1996

Central bank ups interest rate

Brodet slams decision

Jerusalem Post Staff

THE Bank of Israel yesterday raised its short-term interest rates by 30 basis points, effective tomorrow, setting its basic price of credit at 14 percent.

The central bank said the move reflected its conviction that it must pursue a tight monetary policy to achieve the government's inflation targets for 1996.

Considering recent indications that the economy was expanding vigorously - including a large current account deficit, an increase in the retail commerce index, expanded money supply and a rapid growth of the labor market - the bank concluded that the economy was still operating under inflationary pressures.

Finance Ministry director-general David Brodet expressed regret over the central bank's move.

The Treasury's stance has long been that the Bank of Israel's tight money policy exacerbates the country's trade and current account deficit.

The central bank, for its part, contributes the growth in these deficits to the government's inability to significantly trim its own expenses.

Minister Yossi Beilin said the move, "with all that is problemat-

ic about it, is a correct decision," in line with the government's anti-inflation goals.

Galit Lipkis Beck adds: All five main commercial banks said in response they will raise their prime lending rates by a similar 0.3% on Friday.

The banks said they would increase their prime lending rates to 15.5% annually from the current 15.2%. Bank Hapoalim was the first to announce the rise, quickly followed by Bank Leumi, United Mizrahi Bank, Israel Discount Bank and First International Bank.

The banks did not change the rates they charge on other borrowing components.

The Manufacturers Association yesterday criticized Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel's decision to raise the interest rate, saying it will not reduce the inflation rate or bring the economy any closer to its targeted inflation rate of 3% annually, similar to other industrialized countries.

Manufacturers Association President Dan Propper said the decision will "create expectations of a devaluation, further reduce imports, damage exports and lead to an additional growth in the balance of payments gap."

Controversial electricity bill passes first reading

EVELYN GORDON

THE electricity bill easily passed its first reading in the Knesset last night, by a vote of 45-25.

The approval came after Meretz agreed to support the bill, despite its objections, in exchange for a promise that it would go to a committee headed by Finance Committee chairman Gedalya Gal (Labor).

The bill largely extends the Israel Electric Corporation's monopoly for another 10 years, but with two changes: private companies will be given licenses to produce up to 10 percent of the country's electricity and another 10% will be imported from neighboring countries.

The hour before the debate began was spent in a tense negotiating session, as Energy Minister Gonen Segev tried to persuade Meretz to vote for the bill.

The party objected to the 10% ceiling on private production, the extension of the IEC's monopoly and the fact that would-be competitors will not be able to use the IEC's infrastructure the way that other telecommunications companies are allowed to use Bezeq's infrastructure.

This makes competition much more difficult.

"There are improvements in this bill, but they don't justify what happened," added Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein during the meeting with Segev.

He complained bitterly that Meretz was not even told that the bill

would come up last night and that the cabinet never discussed the party's objections.

"What happened here relates to Labor-Meretz relations," he said. "Labor has a majority in the government, and it has a very strong majority when the [IEC] works committee stands behind it. The Meretz ministers don't have a chance of influencing matters."

However, the party decided it would be "inappropriate from the point of view of the government's functioning" to vote against the bill, especially since an additional cabinet discussion would probably not change anything anyway. Instead, the party decided it would work to change the bill in committee.

However, this would be possible only if the committee chairman allowed them a fair hearing. The fact that the bill was passed as a condition of its support, it would demand that the bill go either to the Finance Committee or a joint Finance-Economics Committee headed by Gal.

Gal is known to have his own objections to the bill and is also highly respected for fair dealing by the Meretz MKs.

During the debate on the bill, Segev justified the limited privatization by saying any larger steps would make long-range planning of the economy impossible. Such

planning, he said, is necessary for a country as small, and as rapidly growing, as Israel.

He noted that in Britain, total privatization resulted in a 30% price increase, reduced electricity production and the gradual formation of new monopolies by the distributing companies.

In the US, though there are about 900 different companies, all of which are regional monopolies, he added.

The Likud and Tsomet strongly opposed the bill, saying it was necessary to introduce large-scale competition into the electricity market instead of perpetuating the IEC's monopoly with a few cosmetic changes.

They charged the government with being motivated by electoral considerations - specifically, keeping the several thousand IEC workers happy.

"The return [on this investment] - about 10,000 votes - will be given... to a few ministers who will gain political capital for the upcoming Labor primary," charged Ariel Weinstein (Likud), the first opposition speaker.

Segev indignantly denied this charge. "I am completely free of primary considerations," he said. "I believe in this law."

In the end, the bill was sent to the coalition-dominated House Committee, which will decide whether to send it on to the Finance Committee or the Likud-led Economics Committee.

Trade agreement signed with India

JENNIFER FRIEDLIN and HILLEL KUTTLER
NEW DELHI

ISRAEL and India signed agreements yesterday designed to expand economic and political ties.

The agreements will ease bilateral trade by eliminating double taxation and providing Indian companies access to Western markets via Israel's free trade agreements with the US, Canada and Europe.

It will also encourage businesses from both countries to participate in joint ventures in agriculture, technology, and research and development fields.

The agreements, which were signed in India by Finance Minister Avraham Shohat and Indian Finance Minister Mahmoan Singh and in Israel by Industry and Trade Minister Micha Harish and Indian Commerce Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram, supplement the 1994 trade agreement which led to a 25% increase in trade in 1995, Harish said.

"Since 1994, we have seen a very important development in the trade relationship" between Israel and India, Harish said. "But we don't want to be satisfied; the potential is much greater."

Israeli exports to India totaled \$300 million in 1995, while imports totaled \$125m.

Chidambaram said he did not want to offer projected trade figures for 1996, but said that, as a



Indian Commerce Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram. (Brian Hender)

result of the agreement, 36 Israeli companies - including Osem International, Gamatronics Electronic Company and the Falough Limited plastics manufacturer - are already scheduled to begin working on joint projects with Indian companies.

Chidambaram said Israeli companies should not be discouraged by the difficulties Bezeq had with the Indian government with trying to establish telecommunication networks in the country.

"Anyone coming after Bezeq should be happy the road has been cleared," Chidambaram said. "The newcomer always has difficulties."

Shohat, who is currently in India during a two-week tour of the Far East, told journalists last night that the agreement also covers cooperation against drug trafficking, India is a transit point for opium destined for Israel.

Anonymous investors buy 5% of Osem

Nestle or Union Bank of Switzerland rumored as the purchasers

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

"OSEM Industries will benefit if foreign investors, like Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) or the Swiss food giant Nestle, purchase stock capital in the company," Osem CEO and president Dan Propper said yesterday in reaction to the purchase by an anonymous investor of almost five percent of the company's shares.

The remarks fueled capital market sources' speculation that the buyer is most probably UBS, with which First International Bank has a close working relationship, or Nestle.

In July 1995, Nestle received an option to purchase about 6.22 million shares, representing about 10% of the company's shares, for \$6.75 per share, totaling about \$40 million.

Last Thursday, Israel Discount Bank's provident funds sold 4.99 percent of Osem's stock capital

off market for NIS 68m, equivalent to 1,900 points per share.

The shares were sold at a price 1.2% higher than the value of Osem's shares on the exchange at the start of trading that day. Discount's provident funds' share of Osem has decreased to about 1% from 6% as a result of the sale.

The transaction was conducted against First International Bank, which represented the anonymous investor. The bank refused to reveal the name of their client.

Analysts said it is not clear if the shares were purchased directly for the buyer or for another investor as part of a mediation transaction.

The analysts said the investor's decision to purchase slightly less than 5% of Osem reflects the buyer's preference to remain anonymous. According to securi-

ties law, an investor that buys more than 5% of any stock is obliged to report the purchase.

"I have no idea who the anonymous buyer is, but personally I am satisfied with both forecasts," Propper said. "Both UBS and Nestle can contribute to the company."

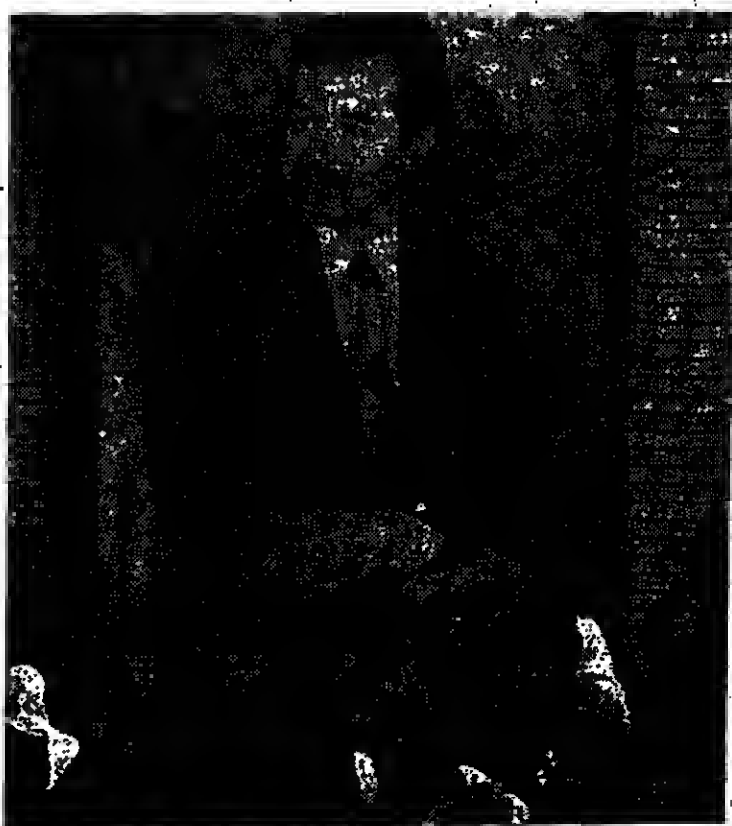
Following the sale, the Claridge group remains the largest shareholder in Osem, with a 21% share in the company. The Propper family has a 13% share in the company, and most of the remaining shares are owned by Osem founders.

Ron Levkovitz, joint general manager of Epsilon investment management firm, said foreign investors' purchase of stock is a sign of confidence in the local market, especially since Osem is not traded cheaply.

"The fact that a foreign investor has purchased shares, at this price, shows confidence in the market," Levkovitz said. "Three major things have happened in the capital market recently after a long period in which nothing occurred. Transactions were concluded at market prices and even higher."

Levkovitz was referring to the Osem sale, Israel Corporation's sale of shares in Lighterage and Supply to a foreign investor for NIS 132.4m, and Elite general manager David Federman's purchase of the British Man company's shares in Elite.

While the Elite transaction involves a foreign investor's sale of shares to local investors, Levkovitz emphasized that "nobody puts money in anything without having a reason. Federman is very familiar with the company and the market."



The Baghdad central market was crammed with shoppers taking advantage of a slump in prices following rumors that talks will lead to a resumption of Iraqi oil sales to world markets. (Reuters)

Apple CEO to customers: Keep the faith

SAN FRANCISCO (Reuters) - The chief executive of Apple Computer, the subject of takeover rumors after it reported a sharp loss for its latest quarter, is appealing to the company's customers to "keep the faith."

Chief Executive Michael Spindler made the appeal in full-page ads in a dozen US newspapers.

According to the San Jose Mercury News, Spindler writes in a letter to the 22 million users of Macintosh computers that "these are challenging times for Apple. We would, therefore, like to communicate directly with you and reassure you that the top priority of Apple's board and management team is to take action to prepare Apple for its next chapter of growth and profitability."

"Rest assured, Apple's mission remains as vibrant today as it was in 1976. It is one that cannot be realized in a year, a decade or even a lifetime."

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Madge Networks yesterday announced it will acquire New Jersey-based Teles Communications, a privately held company specializing in WAN (wide area network) switches. Last November Madge acquired the Tel Aviv-based Lannet as part of an overall strategy to provide end-to-end Token Ring, Ethernet and/or ATM LAN networks. Madge also announced it has strengthened its relationship with Cisco Systems, with joint development agreements for products aimed at the Internet market. Rachel Neiman

Team Telecom, a Team Computers subsidiary, has signed an OEM agreement to provide Motorola with \$3 million in wireless local loop systems to be installed in Eastern Europe. Rachel Neiman

The depreciation allowance on personal computers will be 25 percent for computers bought in 1996 and 33% in 1997, up from 20% today, the Knesset Finance Committee decided yesterday. The allowance for other computer equipment will be raised to 25% as of 1997. The increase is compensation for the fact that computer equipment becomes obsolete very quickly. Evelyn Gordon

Lynn-Bichler to represent Global Human Resources here

RACHEL NEIMAN

LYNN-BIEHLER Human Resources announced yesterday it has signed an agreement to represent placement agency Global Human Resources in Israel.

"There is no doubt that signing of the [strategic alliance] agreement represents another important step in the company's development and brings us into a new era of international activity," board chairman Uriel Lynn said yesterday.

The GHR group includes companies Management Recruiters Incorporated of Cleveland, Ohio, which serves the US; H. Neumann International of Vienna which serves Western Europe; Morgan and Banks of Sydney, Australia and Asia; and Gnd-

dard, Kay, Rodgers of the UK, Europe and India.

GHR group members search and recruit mid-to-upper level technicians, professional, executive and managerial talent for permanent placement or interim staffing.

The group employs more than 4,000 people in 655 offices worldwide.

Lynn-Bichler said that by joining the GHR network it would be able to offer Israeli companies and managers direct access to management personnel around the globe.

Lynn-Bichler said it will also work locally to seek out management personnel for clients abroad with investments here.

Sagi gets 2-year sentence, NIS 300,000 fine

RACHEL NEIMAN and news agencies

THE Tel Aviv District Court yesterday sentenced broker Teddy Sagi to nine months imprisonment plus an additional 15 months suspended sentence and a fine of NIS 300,000.

Sagi, whose prison term starts on February 25, admitted to bribery, fraud and stock manipulation.

In October 1993, Sagi was asked to fund the purchase of NIS 5 million in securities, after which they were sold - with Sagi pocketing NIS 8,000.

Three months later, Sagi was asked by a Bank Discount employee to purchase NIS 20m. in securities. During the court case it was maintained that Sagi earned NIS 105,000 from the second deal.

Sagi's legal counsel has requested that his client not be sent to Ma'asiha Prison, where his estranged stepbrother Ronen Sagi is serving time for the murder of broker Ya'akov Alifrovitz 12 years ago. The matter will be decided by the Prison Authority.

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ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS			
Patiah (foreign currency deposit rates) (30.1.96)			
Currency (deposit base)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar (\$200,000)	4.65	4.50	4.375
Pound sterling (£100,000)	4.75	4.575	4.25
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.675	1.75	2.00
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	1.85	0.95	0.75
Yen (10 million yen)	-	-	-
(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)			
Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (29.1.96)			
CHECKS AND TRANSFERS			
Currency basket	Buy	Sell	Rep. Rates
U.S. dollar	3.2208	3.2054	3.2208
German mark	3.1243	3.1793	3.1243
French franc	2.0570	2.1817	2.1094
Japanese yen (100)	4.6881	4.7739	4.7255
Dutch guilder	0.6103	0.6189	0.6132
Swiss franc	2.9395	2.9778	2.9885
Canadian dollar	1.8739	1.9042	1.8946
Australian dollar	2.2750	2.3106	2.2801
British pound	0.4683	0.4831	0.4754
Spanish peseta (100)	0.4789	0.4841	0.4885
Italian lira (1000)	0.5425	0.5513	0.5449
Portuguese escudo	0.5894	0.5975	0.5921
Caribbean dollar	2.2985	2.3251	2.2985
Australian dollar	2.3165	2.3540	2.2796
S. African rand	0.3549	0.3687	0.3621
Belgian franc (10)	1.0225	1.0387	1.0254
Austrian schilling (10)	2.5845	2.6328	2.5901
Indian rupee (1000)	1.9460	1.9774	1.9585
Israeli sheqel	-	-	1.0000
ECU	-	-	1.9360
West germ. mark	3.8385	3.8984	3.8640
Spanish peseta (100)	4.2715	4.3501	4.3024
Portuguese escudo (100)	2.4739	2.5132	2.4848
* These rates vary according to bank. ** Bank of Israel.			
SOURCE: BANK LEUMI			

Teva buys agreement to purchase Biocraft Laboratories

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

Teva Pharmaceutical Industries has signed an agreement to purchase Biocraft Laboratories, a major manufacturer and marketer of generic drugs in the US, for \$296 million in a deal involving an exchange of shares, the companies announced yesterday.

According to the agreement, Biocraft shareholders will own approximately 10.7 percent of Teva, equivalent to about 6.6 million Teva American Depositary Shares after the transaction is completed.

The companies agreed that Biocraft shareholders will receive 0.461 Teva American Depositary Shares for each outstanding share of Biocraft common stock. Based on the closing price of Teva's ADR on Friday, Biocraft shareholders will receive \$20.86 per share of Biocraft stock.

Teva said completion of the transaction is subject to the receipt of regulatory approvals and the approval of Biocraft

shareholders. Biocraft's principal stockholders, the Snyder family which own about 60% of Biocraft outstanding shares, already have an agreement with Teva, pursuant to which they have agreed to vote their shares in favor of the merger.

The companies anticipate that the transaction will be completed in the second quarter of 1996. The combined US operations

will be headed by William Fletcher, the current president and chief executive officer of Lemmon Company, Teva's US generic pharmaceutical subsidiary.

"We believe that the acquisition of Biocraft will broaden our product line, expand distribution and increase manufacturing capacity - particularly of antibiotic raw materials, thereby further strengthening Teva's competitive position in the growing worldwide generic pharmaceutical market," Fletcher said.

مركز من القبول



DODGE CITY - Boston's Ted Donato (21) ducks under a check from Montreal's Chris Murray (57) in first period action in Montreal on Sunday.

Canadiens edge Bruins

MONTREAL (AP) - Martin Rucinsky scored two goals and set up another Sunday, leading the Montreal Canadiens past Boston 5-4 in the Bruins' final visit to the Forum.

Rucinsky had five goals and five assists in three Canadiens victories over a four-day period.

Vateri Bure, Brian Savage and Pierre Turgeon also scored for Montreal. Sandy Moger scored twice while Dave Reid and Adam Oates also had goals for Boston, which ousted Montreal 33-2, including 19-2 in the third period.

The Forum opened in 1924 and

the Canadiens are to move into a new home March 16.

Montreal goaltender Jocelyn Thibault had to leave the game with a pulled shoulder muscle after a collision with teammate Patrice Brisebois late in the first period. Priz Jahlonksi took over in the net.

Capitals 3, Flyers 2
Steve Konowalchuk's second goal of the game, with 39.7 seconds left in overtime, gave Washington the win over slumping Philadelphia.

Konowalchuk took a pass from Kelly Miller, who spun around a Flyer in the right circle before sending the puck into the slot. Konowalchuk then

fired a shot past goaltender Ron Hextall before falling to the ice.

Pai Peake got the tying goal with 7:23 left in regulation as the Capitals beat Philadelphia at home for the first time since February 1992. Washington was 0-5 with four draws during the span.

The Flyers are 0-3-2 in their last four games and 1-2-6 since January 3. It was the first time that former Washington coach Terry Murray lost to the Capitals since taking over behind the Philadelphia bench last season.

SUNDAY'S NHL RESULTS:
Montreal 5, Boston 4
Washington 3, Philadelphia 2 (OT)

NHL scoring leaders

(through January 28)

Player/Team	GP	G	A	PTS	PM
Lemieux, PIT	41	45	54	99	36
Way, PIT	46	40	56	96	52
Francis, PIT	46	21	60	81	22
Messier, NYR	50	36	37	73	56
Crutcher, LA	50	14	58	72	30
Salko, COL	49	31	37	68	30
Selanne, WIN	46	24	44	68	16
Forsberg, COL	43	16	52	68	31
Yates, NYR	50	34	33	67	34

GUESS WHO?

Dallas' Larry Brown is the second defensive back to be named Super Bowl MVP. Who was the first?

Lawrence Taylor
William "the Refrigerator" Perry
Jake Scott
Dick Butkus

Answer to Friday's "Guess Which": The Kansas City Chiefs were the first team to lose a Super Bowl (1967) and then win one in another season (1970).

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EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	T	PTS	GF	GA	Home	Away	Div
N.Y. Rangers	30	11	9	69	187	138	18-2-5	12-9-4	6-1-4
Florida	30	13	5	65	172	130	17-5-2	13-9-3	12-4-1
Philadelphia	24	15	5	59	169	173	14-6-5	9-12-7	5-5-5
Washington	23	20	5	51	132	122	14-6-3	9-12-2	9-9-2
New Jersey	21	22	5	47	126	121	16-10-0	9-12-5	9-9-2
Tampa Bay	20	20	7	47	139	157	12-7-4	8-13-3	4-8-3
N.Y. Islanders	12	27	8	32	133	179	7-11-5	5-18-3	5-12-3

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division	W	L	T	PTS	GF	GA	Home	Away	Div
Detroit	34	9	4	72	177	104	18-2-2	16-7-2	8-2-3
Chicago	25	15	11	61	172	141	14-6-5	11-7-6	5-5-5
Toronto	22	17	9	53	149	139	12-7-4	10-10-5	7-3-3
St. Louis	20	18	8	48	127	130	11-9-4	9-10-4	6-6-2
Winnipeg	20	24	4	44	170	178	13-9-3	7-15-1	7-8-2
Dallas	14	23	10	38	151	164	9-10-6	5-13-4	1-12-3

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Israel's World Cup qualifying match schedule determined

Scharf slams 'scandalous' Russian-Bulgarian deal

ORI LEWIS

THE national soccer team's World Cup qualifying schedule was fixed last night when representatives from European qualifying Group 5 met in Tel Aviv to determine the group's schedule.

The fixture list came about only after a marathon meeting at the IFA's offices at Ramat Gan Stadium, in which members of the group's five countries convened to try and work out an amicable schedule.

Group favorites Russia and Bulgaria arrived with an apparent strategy already in place, and the outcome of the meeting - which opened in the early morning and was completed only at 6:30 p.m. - means the two sides play both their matches after all the others are completed.

The pre-determined agreement between the Russians and the Bulgarians drew harsh criticism, particularly from Israel coach Shlomo Scharf, who called the deal "scandalous."

At certain stages during the day it appeared as if the meeting might collapse, thus leaving FIFA to arrange the schedule arbitrarily and without consultation. When it was discovered that FIFA would not intervene in the Russian-Bulgarian pact, the representatives from the five sides sat down and finalized the match dates.

Israel's fixture list is a particularly tough one, with the Bulgarians coming to Ramat Gan on September 1 this year and the Russians coming in the second match on October 9. Israel will conclude its group matches against the Russians in Moscow on June 8, 1997 and then travel to face Bulgaria in Sofia on August 20.

With Israel looking, on paper at least, the next strongest team in the group, it will be imperative to gain as many points as possible against Cyprus and Luxembourg.

The nine winners of each European group will qualify automatically for the World Cup finals, along with the second-place finisher with the best record among the nine.

Four other qualifiers will be decided in a play-off between the other second-place finishers.

Israel's eight-match fixture is:
Sunday, September 1, 1996 v. Bulgaria (home)
Wednesday, October 9, 1996 v. Russia (away)
Sunday, November 10, 1996 v. Cyprus (home)
Sunday, December 15, 1996 v. Luxembourg (home)
Sunday, March 30, 1997 v. Luxembourg (away)
Sunday, April 30, 1997 v. Cyprus (home)
Sunday, June 8, 1997 v. Russia (away)
Wednesday, August 20, 1997 v. Bulgaria (away)

Gordon helps Hapoel Jerusalem beat Hapoel Tel Aviv, retain first place

ARYEH DEAN COHEN

HAPOEL Tel Aviv, who've beaten Hapoel Jerusalem in Malha more than any other club, almost did it again last night, but clutch shooting and passing by Jerusalem's Adi Gordon in the final minutes gave his team an 86-82 victory, allowing it to stay atop the National Basketball League.

Not even Nanad Markovitch's 35 points could deny Jerusalem the victory although at times Markovitch and his hustling young teammates looked like they were on the verge of an upset.

Yuval Ashkenazi (10 points), Meir Tapiro (11) and Mor Ne'eman (10) stayed right with the league-leaders down to the wire, helping to carry the offensive load with the unstoppable Markovitch. After narrowing the

41-33 gap to 49-46, they staged another comeback late in the game just when it appeared they were out of it.

Trailing 59-50, coach Moshe Weinkrantz's club raced down the floor on several fast breaks and caught Jerusalem napping, with Ashkenazi hitting to cut the lead 61-59. Thanks to 15 Jerusalem turnovers, Tel Aviv got plenty of opportunities to stay in the game and when Markovitch hit one of many driving lay-ups he got on the night, the game was tied at 65.

When Billy Thompson - who was playing injured and whose movement was limited on both sides of the floor - hit a three pointer, it looked like Jerusalem

was safe. Tapiro answered with one of his own, however, before Jerusalem captain Adi Gordon again provided the heroics for coach Pini Gershon's squad.

Gordon nailed a three-pointer, then another to give Jerusalem a 76-72 lead with 2:22 to play. After Markovitch tied it at 76, Gordon hit two free throws, then found Thompson underneath for one of five assists to make it 80-76.

Markovitch got one last chance trailing 85-82 when Jerusalem threw the ball away with just 30 seconds to play but he failed to can the three-pointer from the corner, and Jerusalem escaped defeat, just as they did last week at home in overtime vs. Rishon

Lezion. The victory kept Hapoel Jerusalem (11-1), led by Norris Coleman with 22, in first place thanks to its first round victory over Maccabi Tel Aviv. Gordon had 19 and Thompson 16.

Hapoel Tel Aviv who deserve a ton of credit for playing Jerusalem throughout the game, fell to 3-9.

National Basketball League

Team	W	L	PTS
Hapoel Jerusalem	11	1	23
Maccabi Tel Aviv	11	1	23
Hapoel Galil Elyon	8	4	20
Bnei Herzliya	8	4	20
Maccabi Rishon	8	4	20
Hapoel Sded	7	5	19
Hapoel Holon	5	7	17
Hapoel Eilat	4	8	16
Maccabi Jerusalem	3	9	15
Hapoel Tel Aviv	3	9	15
Hapoel Gvat	2	10	14
Maccabi Ramat Gan	2	10	14

NBA scoring leaders

(through January 28)

Player	GP	PTS	AVG
Scottie Pippen, CHI	41	1071	26.1
Charles Barkley, PHO	41	1067	26.0
John Stockton, JAZ	40	1026	25.6
Clayton Kress, MEM	44	1129	25.5
Scottie Pippen, CHI	30	845	28.2
Harold Green, MIL	42	1019	24.3
C. Robinson, POR	38	989	26.0
Charles Barkley, PHO	40	1021	25.5
Rico Ghees, IND	39	1001	25.7
Richmond, SAC	38	954	25.1
Barkley, PHO	35	921	26.3
Eric S. Galt, S.A.	35	857	24.5
Earvin Magic Johnson, L.A.	37	942	25.5
Robert Horry, HO	41	1019	24.9
John Stockton, JAZ	41	1026	25.0
Baker, MIL	40	1021	25.4
Kenneth Camby, SEA	41	959	23.4
Tim Lincecum, SEA	40	989	24.7
Mike Bibby, IND	40	981	24.5

SCOREBOARD

Local rugby - weekend results:
ASA Tel Aviv 24, Ra'anana 3; Eagles I 30, Ass Jerusalem 17; Hap. Galil Elyon 52, Rishon LeZion 6; Hap. Kibbutz Yotvat 19, EDMS Iluzim 14.
Ice Hockey - Israel 19, Turkey 0

It's official: Magic is back

INGLEWOOD, CA (AP) - Magic Johnson returned to the NBA from an off-and-on retirement by signing a contract yesterday with the Los Angeles Lakers for the remainder of the season.

His first game will be against the Golden State Warriors tonight at the Forum.

Johnson, 36, will be playing in his first NBA game other than exhibitions since June 12, 1991. He retired five months later, just prior to the 1991-92 season, after testing positive for the AIDS virus.

"He signed (a contract) about 10 months ago, and sold his interest in the Lakers," said Johnson's agent, Lon Rosen, just before practice at Loyola Marymount University. "He will be playing tomorrow night, No. 32 will be back."

There have been several aborted Johnson comebacks since his original retirement, and several other speculative comebacks. But Johnson continually changed his mind and finally, last summer, said he would never return.

But for Johnson, the word "never" has never been a definite.

Rosen said Johnson will decide following this season what he wants to do thereafter.

Johnson will be 37 by the time the 1996-97 season starts.

"He'll continue in all his businesses," Rosen said. "His touring team will postpone its tour."

Lakers coach Del Harris was happy about the move. "It's an exciting day, obviously, for everybody," Harris said. "There's no doubt the players are looking forward to playing with him on a real basis."

"I've been excited about it for some time. The team's playing well and now we expect to play even better. I'm more happy for Earvin, really, than anything else."

Johnson likely would play power forward. He led the Lakers to five NBA championships during the 1980s as a point guard.

Teammate Cedric Ceballos said Johnson wanted to play today to "warm himself up for Michael Jordan."

The Lakers play the Chicago Bulls on Friday night at the Forum.

UMass holding steady at No. 1 in AP poll

NEW YORK (AP) - Massachusetts was atop the college basketball poll for the sixth straight week today, while Eastern Michigan was ranked for the first time since moving to Division I for the 1974-75 season.

The Minutemen (18-0), the only unbeaten Division I team, received 59 of 63 first-place votes and 1,571 points from the national media panel. 62 points more than Kentucky, the runner-up

each week to UMass since it moved to No. 1.

Eastern Michigan (15-1) moved into the rankings at No. 23. The Eagles, whose only loss was at Texas-El Paso, came in on eight-game winning streak, all in the Mid-American Conference.

Kentucky (17-1), whose only loss was to Massachusetts, received three first-place votes and was followed again in the top five by Kansas, Connecticut and

Cincinnati. Connecticut (19-1), which won its school-record 18th straight game on Sunday, got the only other first-place vote.

Villanova moved up one place to sixth and was followed in the Top Ten by Utah, North Carolina, Georgetown and Penn State. Utah and North Carolina each moved up three places, while Penn State's jump was four spots. Georgetown, which lost to St. John's on Saturday, dropped three places.

Memphis led the Second Ten and was followed by Wake Forest, Virginia Tech, Arizona, Texas Tech, Iowa, Purdue, Syracuse, UCLA and Michigan.

Boston College was No. 21, and the rankings were rounded out by Auburn, Eastern Michigan, Clemson and Georgia Tech.

Dropping out of the rankings were Marquette and California, both of which came aboard just last week.

SPORTS BRIEF

Bekier wins lawn bowls title
In the third annual lawn bowls Youth Championships, it was for a third time, a finals encounter between 19-year-olds Yair Bekier and Amir Yaron. Bekier came out with his second title, reversing his last year's defeat, in beating Yaron 21-15, in a round-robin tournament at the Ramat Gan club.

Yair Lieberthal won third place by beating Assaf Greengard 18-8 after peels at 8-11.

A youth team of six are to be selected for a reciprocal tour to Ireland in July this year.

Norman Spiro



UNDER SIEGE - Lobos quarterback Chaim Zilber feels the heat during their 25-23 loss to Israel Center in the Dagesh II American Touch Football league semifinals, played over the weekend at Teddy Stadium in Jerusalem. Zionshorts won the Friday afternoon, beating defending champions Big Blue 25-19. On annual Holyland Bowl which will be played at the Ramat Eshkol (Brian Hender)

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